Poetry as Window and Mirror

POSITIONING THE POET IN HELLENISTIC POETRY

JACQUELINE KLOOSTER

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Positioning the Poet in Hellenistic Poetry

By

Jacqueline Klooster

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements IX
Texts, Translations and Conventions XI

Introduction 1

Chapter One. Poetic Predecessors in Epigram 15
1.1. From Greece to Alexandria 15
1.2. Greek Poets and Their Predecessors 16
1.3. Royal Patronage and Cultural Memory 18
1.4. Which Poets and What Past? 21
1.5. Poetical Predecessors in Epigram 24
1.5.1. The Text as Monument 26
1.5.2. Biographical Readings 35
1.6. Conclusion 41

Chapter Two. Coming to Terms with Poetic Models 43
2.1. Tradition and Originality 43
2.2. Meeting Ancient Poets 45
2.2.1. Timon, Xenophanes and Pyrrho in Homer's Hades .. 47
2.2.2. Hipponax in Callimachus' *Iambi* and Herondas' *Mimiambi* 49
2.3. Paradigmatic Poets: Theocritus 16 54
2.4. Biased Readings: Hermesianax' *Leontion* 60
2.5. Poets to Avoid 63
2.5.1. Imitating Homer 64
2.5.2. Liking Antimachus 69
2.6. Conclusion 72

Chapter Three. Appropriating Mythical Poets 75
3.1. Inventing Traditions 75
3.2. Mythical Poets 77
3.3. Orpheus in Greek Tradition 81
3.4. Orpheus in the *Argonautica* 82
3.5. Orpheus and the Hymnic *Argonautica* 87
3.6. Theocritus and the Invention of Bucolic Poetry 91

3.7. Ancient Theories on the Origins of Bucolic Poetry 97
3.8. Daphnis in *Idyll* 1 99
3.9. Allusive Narrative in Ancient Poetry 103
3.10. Daphnis in the Other *Idylls* 105
3.11. Daphnis and Comatas 108
3.12. A World of Song 110
3.13. Conclusion 112

Chapter Four. Criticizing Contemporaries 115
4.1. The Muses' Birdcage 115
4.2. Poetic Competition and Strife 117
4.3. Bourdieu's Field of Cultural Production 120
4.4. Callimachus and Apollonius 121
4.5. The *Aetia*-Prologue 127
4.6. The Telchines and the *Lyde* 135
4.7. Callimachus' *Iambi* 137
4.8. Epigrams 141
4.9. Conclusion 144

Chapter Five. Praising Contemporaries 147
5.1. Praised Poetics and Poetics of Praise 147
5.2. Praising the Old and the New 149
5.3. Reading the Signs in Aratus' *Phaenomena* 154
5.4. The Mirror of Immortality 161
5.5. Inviting Comparison 166
5.6. Eliciting Praise 169
5.7. Conclusion 172

Chapter Six. Persona, Alias and Alter Ego in *Sphragis*-Poetry 175
6.1. *Sphragides* 175
6.2. The Seal or Testament of Posidippus 177
6.3. Role-Playing versus Self-Portrayal 183
6.4. Allusive Names, Elusive Poets 188
6.5. Punning and Wordplay 190
6.6. Theocritus, Simichidas and Lycidas 195
6.7. Conclusion 207

Chapter Seven. Authority and Inspiration in the Age of the Museum 209
7.1. Questioning the Muse 209
7.2. Homeric Scholarship and Hellenistic Poetry 212

7.3. Overview of Passages Featuring ὑποφήτης 214
7.4. The Μοῦσαι ὑποφήτορες of Apollonius 217
7.5. Apollonius on Poetic Inspiration 222
7.6. Parallel Representations of the Muses 225
7.7. Theocritus 227
7.7.1. *Idyll* 16: *Κλέος* and Prophecy 227
7.7.2. *Idyll* 17: Immortal Fame for an Immortal King 229
7.7.3. *Idyll* 22: Rewriting the Poetic Past 233
7.8. Conclusion 237

Conclusion 239

Appendix. List of Hellenistic Epigrams on Poets 247
Bibliography 253
Index Locorum 271
Index of Greek Terms 275
Index Rerum 277

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While I was writing this book, many wonderful things happened to me. This is why I wish to dedicate it to my dear parents, who encouraged and supported me in so many ways, to David, *dimidium animae meae*, and to little Julia, my pride and joy.

TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

1. *Texts*

Adler, A. (1967; 1971) [1928; 1931; 1933; 1935] *Suidae Lexicon, 4 vols.*, Leipzig
Allen, T.W. (1931) *Homeri Ilias, vols. 1–3*, Oxford
Austin, C., Bastianini, G. (2002) *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan
Beckby, H. (1957–1958) *Anthologia Graeca: Griechisch-Deutsch*, München
Bernabé Pajares, A., Olmos, O. (eds.) (1996) *Poetarum epicorum graecorum testimonia et fragmenta*, Leipzig
Burnet, J., (1967) [1907] *Platonis opera*, *vol. 5*. Oxford
Cunningham, I.C. (1971) *Herodas:* Mimiambi, Oxford
Diels, H., Kranz, W. (1966) [1951] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, vol. 1*, Berlin
—— (1966) [1952] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, vol. 2*, Berlin
Drachmann, A.B. (1: 1969; 2: 1967; 3: 1966) [1: 1903; 2: 1910; 3: 1927] *Scholia vetera in Pindari Carmina, 3 vols.*, Leipzig
Gow, A.S.F. (1952) *Theocritus, vol. I: Text*, Cambridge
Gow, A.S.F., Page, D.L. (1965) *The Hellenistic Epigrams, vols. I: Text and II: Commentary*, Cambridge
Harder, M.A. (2010) Callimachus *Aetia*, Oxford
Kaibel, G. (1965; 1966) [1887; 1890] *Athenaei Naucratitae Deipnosophistarum libri xv, 3 vols.*, Leipzig
Kassel, R. (1968) [1965] *Aristotelis de arte poetica liber*, Oxford
Kidd, D.A. (1997) *Aratus:* Phaenomena, Cambridge
Kock, T. (1880) *Comicorum Atticorum fragmenta*, vol. 1. Leipzig
Legrand, P.-E. (1945)) *Hérodote.* Histoires, *vol. 4*, Paris
Lloyd-Jones, H., Parsons, P. (1983) *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, Berlin
Long, H.S. (1966) [1964] *Diogenis Laertii Vitae Philosophorum, 2 vols.*, Oxford
Maehler, H. (2003) *Bacchylides: Carmina cum fragmentis*, München
Maehler, H., Snell, B. (1971) *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis, pt. 1, 5th edn.*, Leipzig
Maehler, H. (1987) *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis, pt. 2*, Leipzig
Martin, J. (1974) *Scholia in Aratum vetera*, Stuttgart
Page, D.L. (1967) [1962] *Poetae melici Graeci*, Oxford
Page, D.L. (1975) *Epigrammata Graeca*, Oxford
Pertusi, A. (1955) *Scholia vetera in Hesiodi opera et Dies*, Milan
Pfeiffer, R. (1949) *Callimachus, vol. 1, fragmenta*, Oxford
—— (1953) *Callimachus, vol. 2, Hymni et Epigrammata*, Oxford
Powell, J.U. (1981) [1925] *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford
Radt, S. (1977) *Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta*, vol. 4. Göttingen
Ross, W.D. (1964) [1959] *Aristotelis ars rhetorica*, Oxford
Vian, F. (2009) *Apollonios de Rhodes.* Argonautiques, *tome 1 chant 1–2, Texte établi et commenté par F. Vian et traduit par E. Delage, 2nd edn.*, Paris

——— (2009) *Apollonios de Rhodes*. Argonautiques, *Tome 2 Chant 3. Texte établi et commenté par F. Vian et traduit par E. Delage*, Paris

——— (2009) *Apollonios de Rhodes*. Argonautiques, *Tome 3 Chant 4. Texte établi et commenté par F. Vian et traduit par E. Delage et F. Vian*, Paris

Voigt, E.M. (1971) *Sappho et Alcaeus, fragmenta*, Amsterdam

Von der Mühll, P. (1962) *Homeri Odyssea*, Basel

Wendel, K. (1967) [1914] *Scholia in Theocritum vetera*, Leipzig

——— (1974) [1935] *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium vetera*, Berlin

West, M.L. (1966) *Hesiod:* Theogony, Oxford

——— (1992) *Iambi et elegi Graeci, vol. 2 (Simonides, Archilochus, Hipponax, 2nd edn.)*, Oxford

——— (1978) *Hesiod:* Works & Days, Oxford

Young, D., Diehl, E. (1971) *Theognis*, Leipzig

2. *Translations*

Austin, C., Bastianini, G. (2002) *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan

Freese, J.H. (1926) *Aristotle:* The Art of Rhetoric, London

Gow, A.S.F. (1952) *Theocritus: vol. I: Text and Translation, vol. II: Commentary*, Cambridge

Gutzwiller, K.J. (1998) *Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context*, Berkeley & Los Angeles

Kidd, D.A. (1997) *Aratus:* Phaenomena, Cambridge

Most, G. (2006) *Hesiod:* Theogony, Works and Days, *Testimonia*, Cambridge Mass. and London

——— (2007) *Hesiod*: The Shield, Catalogue of Women, *Other Fragments*, Cambridge Mass. and London

Nisetich, F.J. (2001) *The Poems of Callimachus*, Oxford

Race, W.H. (1997) *Pindar:* Olympian Odes; Pythian Odes, Cambridge Mass. and London

——— (1997) *Pindar:* Nemean Odes; Isthmian Odes; *Fragments*, Cambridge Mass. and London

Race, W.H. (2008) *Apollonius Rhodius:* Argonautica, Cambridge, Mass. and London

Translations are my own, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes existing translations have been used and adapted, mostly to modernize the English (turning *didst* into *did* etc.). Other reasons for adapting are indicated in the notes.

3. *Abbreviations*

AB	Austin, C., Bastianini, G. (2002) *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan
Bernabé	Bernabé Pajares, A., Olmos, O. (eds.) (1996, 2004) *Poetarum epicorum Graecorum testimonia et fragmenta*, Leipzig
DK	Diels, H., Kranz, W. (1966) [1951] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, vol. 1*, Berlin (1966) [1952] *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, vol. 2*, Berlin
Drachmann	Drachmann, A.B. (1: 1969; 2: 1967; 3: 1966) [1: 1903; 2: 1910; 3: 1927] *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina, 3 vols.* Leipzig
DNP	Cancik, H., Schneider, H., Landfester, M. (eds.) (2008) *Der Neue Pauly*, Brill Online
GP	Gow, A.S.F., Page, D.L. (1965) *The Hellenistic Epigrams, vols. I: Text and II: Commentary*, Cambridge
Kock	Kock, T. (1880) *Comicorum Atticorum fragmenta*, vol. 1. Leipzig
LSJ	Liddel, H.G., Scott, R., Jones, H.S., McKenzie, R. (1968) *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford
Maehler	Maehler, H. (2003) *Bacchylides: carmina cum fragmentis*, Leipzig
Snell-Maehler	Maehler, H., Snell, B. (1971) *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis, pt. 1, 5th edn.*, Leipzig —— (1987) *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis, pt. 2, 5th edn.*, Leipzig
OLD	R.C. Palmer (1968) *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford
PMG	Page, D.L. (1967) [1962] *Poetae melici Graeci*, Oxford
Powell	Powell, J.U. (1981) [1925] *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford
Pf.	Pfeiffer, R. (1949) *Callimachus, vol. 1, fragmenta*, Oxford —— (1953) *Callimachus, vol. 2, Hymni et Epigrammata*, Oxford
Radt	Radt, S. (1977) *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta*, vol. 4. Göttingen
SEG	J.J.E. Hondius (1923 etc.) *Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden
SH	Lloyd-Jones, H., Parsons, P. (1983) *Supplementum Hellenisticum*, Berlin

Standard abbreviations as found in LSJ and OLD apply for ancient authors and works; for journals *l'Année Philologique* (Marouzeau) is followed.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, Hellenistic literary studies were in a sorry state, judging by the introduction of Gregory Hutchinson's 1988 book *Hellenistic Poetry*:

> The celebrated poets of the third century BC have not received much literary treatment; what is sadder, they seem fairly seldom to be read with much enjoyment and understanding. (...) Here stands the great bridge between the literatures of Greece and Rome; yet it seems only rarely to receive more than a swift and very limited inspection.[1]
>
> (Hutchinson, 1988: 1)

Far from being neglected, today this is a booming field, so much so in fact, that the 2004 Groningen workshop on Hellenistic poetry resorted to a conference on Hellenistic poets "beyond the canon." Whereas the great third-century poets Apollonius, Callimachus, and Theocritus would have qualified as such for most readers twenty years ago, this category is now reserved for such authors as Crates of Malles, Hermesianax of Colophon, and Simias of Cos.[2] And who knows what the future may bring? The stream of publications in the field of Hellenistic literature gives no sign of drying up, and the on-line Hellenistic Bibliography by Martine Cuypers currently includes more than 20,000 titles.

Hellenistic Poetry has indeed enjoyed a notable re-appreciation in recent years and received ample scholarly discussion, especially focusing on its reception and innovation of Greek poetic tradition. So I am aware that it is hardly the untrodden road I am setting out on. Nevertheless, this book wishes to add, however modestly, to our picture of how Hellenistic poetry works by looking at it from a slightly different angle. Concentrating on the interaction between contemporary poets, it attempts to view the dynamics of imitation and reception in the light of poetical

[1] This would seem to be a slight rhetorical exaggeration; Hellenistic poetry was certainly not invisible before 1988, although it is true that in particular the last twenty years have seen a great boom in Hellenistic scholarship. For this study I have not been able to take into account any literature that appeared 2007 or later, unless I had a privileged knowledge of it.

[2] The Groningen Hellenistic workshops have greatly contributed to the opening up of the subject in general.

self-positioning. In the courtly Alexandrian surroundings, choosing a poetic model and affiliation determines one's position in the cultural field. This book sets out to chart, then, not only the well-known complexities of handling the poetic past, but especially their relation to the poetic interaction of the Hellenistic, in particular Alexandrian poets.

This study started out as an enquiry into the representation of "the poet" in early Hellenistic poetry, that is to say, the extant works of the Greek-speaking poets of the third century BCE.[3] The initial query was: how do these poets represent *themselves* as poets? I came across the following passage:

> Qui est poète doit confesser la poésie, *sagt Paul Valéry. Die Frage was ein Dichter sei, haben immer und zuerst die Dichter selbst beantwortet—durch ihr Werk. Am Anfang steht die Dichtung, die Poetik ist sekundär. Die Frage kann weder theoretisch gestellt werden, noch theoretisch beantwortet werden, und so sind denn auch zu allen Zeiten die Antworten so verschieden gewesen wie die Dichtung selbst.* (Maehler, 1963: 1)

This sounds like common sense: in order to find out what poets think about their profession, look at their poetry. But, as most scholars would agree, this is more complicated for Hellenistic poets than for poets of other periods in Greek literary history because the Hellenistic era differs from what went before in that poets of the archaic and the classical age wrote about their own profession only occasionally and only in select passages, whereas Hellenistic poets seem to have constantly reflected on poetics, poets and poetry from all ages. Orpheus, the legendary bard, is an important character in Apollonius' epic *Argonautica*; Callimachus' *Iambus* 1 presents the poet Hipponax as a speaking persona; numerous epigrams represent and evaluate the great poets of the early Greek literary tradition and frequently criticize or praise contemporary colleagues. It seems reasonable to suppose that this is done to reflect on the author's *own* position as a poet. Therefore the question how Hellenistic poets viewed themselves as poets turns out to be only part of the broader question of how they viewed poets in general and in history.

[3] The corpus of poets discussed includes Callimachus, Apollonius, Theocritus, Aratus, Herondas, Hermesianax, Timon of Phlius, Phanocles, and the epigrammatists Leonidas, Asclepiades, Posidippus, Hedylus, Nossis, Alexander Aetolus, Dioscorides, Alcaeus of Messene, Mnasalces, Crates, Damagetus, Nicaenetus of Samos, Simias of Rhodes and Theodoridas of Samos. I have chosen not to discuss Nicander and Lycophron, because there are convincing arguments that they belong to a different era, cf. respectively Magnelli (2007: 185–204), Kosmetatou (2000: 32–53).

Can this preoccupation with poetics be explained by the nature of Hellenistic poetry and the circumstances under which it came into existence? Some aspects of this poetry suggest this and consequently have invited critical attention time and again. Foremost are its new and unexpected combinations of various generic elements (Kroll's famous *Kreuzung der Gattungen*),[4] its treatment of old myths in new (narrative) ways, its strong emphasis on the human and un-heroic element or on romance, and its somewhat ironic or intellectual distance from its subject matter. As opposed to classical drama, for instance, this poetry seems hardly occupied with social or political issues. This has led some critics to see Hellenistic poetry as a kind of modernist or even post-modern *Spielerei*, an experimental art for art's sake written in an ivory tower, which frivolously mixes in random elements from earlier poetry in order to create surprise effects:[5]

> *Als ernsthaft galt die Befassung mit Wissenschaft, nicht mit Dichtung. Diese war zum Spiel, zur paidia geworden. Ihr traditioneller Stoff wurde nicht mehr ernst, sondern sentimental oder ironisch, also spielerisch behandelt. Der Dichtung fehlte die frühere gesellschaftliche politische Bedeutung, insbesondere ihre Funktion im Kult, sie war also Spiel. Formal verlegte sie sich's aufs Experiment, auf spielerisch Versuchen. Zu solchem Spiel haben sich Hellenistische Dichter denn auch bekannt.* (Muth, 1966: 259)

Of course such a verdict contains elements of truth, but it obscures the fact that some archaic or classical poetry is also playful, full of surprise effects, and preoccupied with the personal rather than the political and also consists of disparate generic elements.[6] Still, it may be claimed that Hellenistic poetry, in a self-conscious manner, takes these characteristics one step further.

How can this palpable if subtle difference be explained? Traditionally, scholars have rightly pointed to the societal and cultural changes that came over Greek society after the conquests of Alexander the Great for an explanation:

> Now for the first time the Greeks were convinced that the old order of things in the political as well as in the intellectual field, their whole way

[4] Kroll (1924).

[5] Cf. e.g. Howald (1923: 137): "*Die alexandrinische Kultur is nicht zu verstehen wenn man sie Ernst nimmt.*" Further: e.g. De Marco (1963: 353), Weingarth (1967:48), Snell (1975 [1946]: 284), Schwinge (1986: 76).

[6] E.g. the *Homeric Hymns*, Pindar's epinicia, Euripides' dramas, Sappho's lyric poetry, recently the new Simonides-fragments of the so-called *Plataea-elegy* respectively.

> of life, indeed, was gone forever. They became conscious of a definitive break between the mighty past and a still uncertain present. (...) The new generation of about 300 BC living under a new monarchy realized that the great old poetical forms also belonged to ages gone forever.[7]
>
> (Pfeiffer, 1968: 87)

It would however appear that, precisely because the Hellenistic Greeks recognized the differences between their way of life and the great past, they also sought *continuity* with this past.[8] One well-known example is in the establishment of the famous Library of Alexandria by Ptolemy Soter. All important texts of the Greek literary heritage were kept there to be studied by scholar-poets such as Callimachus and Apollonius; it literally brought the literary heritage of Greece to a new seat, in Alexandria.[9] Living in a changed world yet confronted daily with the legacy of the past, they sought to come to terms with it and learn from it in their own writings.

> The new writers had to look back to the old masters (...) not to imitate them—this was regarded impossible or at least undesirable—but in order to be trained by them in their own poetical technique. Their incomparably precious heritage had to be saved and studied.[10] (Pfeiffer, 1968: 87)

The Hellenistic poets' difference with what went before, then, paradoxically seems to lie in their awareness of this difference, the self-consciousness which resulted from their critical study of the great texts of the past. If we wish to know how they saw themselves as poets, therefore, the first thing to take into account is their relationship to the past.

One way in which their poetry expresses this is sophisticated and extensive intertextuality with and allusions to the poetic texts that were studied in the Library. This tendency is to blame for much of the bad press Hellenistic poetry used to get as being pedantic, derivative, and overly intellectual:

> *Si la création du Musée seconda les efforts des érudits et l'éclosion des travaux individuels, elle ne put ni faire naître des génies, ni inspirer des oeuvres nationales. Ce fut une renaissance mais aussi un déclin. Il y eut beaucoup*

---

[7] Cf. e.g. Bulloch (1989: 542), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 17–26).

[8] Contra e.g. Radke (2007), who argues that Hellenistic poetry attempts to present itself as radically new and the past as something definitively closed off.

[9] Cf. e.g. Blum (1991: 104–105). Of course, *mutatis mutandis* the same applies to the other great libraries of the age, such as the one in Pergamon.

[10] Cf. e.g. Hunter and Fantuzzi (2004: 1–37).

> *de gens de lettres, mais peu de grands écrivains, beaucoup de livres, mais peu de chefs-d'oeuvre. Ce siècle, si remarquable par l'érudition ne produisit qu'une littérature de second ordre.*[11] (Couat, 1882: *Préface*)

However, in a world that has gotten used to—however different its aims may be—allusion in the works of (post-) modern authors like T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, or Derek Walcot, the relentless erudition of Hellenistic poetry is appreciated rather differently. No longer victim to reductive attempts at *Quellenforschung*, allusion and intertextuality are now recognized as aesthetic ideals in their own right and form a topic that receives scholarly comment as a matter of course.[12]

Poets of the Past

Yet, there is another way in which Hellenistic poets reveal their wish for continuity with the past that is even more relevant to my initial question of how they represent themselves. It concerns the way they introduce poets of the past as "characters" in their poetry. Such poetic predecessors appear in Hellenistic poetry strikingly often and play an important and novel role in it, as is recognized for instance by Fantuzzi and Hunter:

> In the Hellenistic Age (...) we find that another figure takes his place beside the divine inspirer, or at times as a substitute for him in the role of "guarantor" of the origin of the work. The conventional role of acting as a source of inspiration may well be left to the Muses, but now an illustrious predecessor often steps in to teach the new poet the ropes and how to proceed to construct the work he has undertaken or else he verifies and ratifies the correctness of the method that the new poet has followed.[13]
> (Fantuzzi and Hunter, 2004: 1)

---

[11] Cf. e.g. Rose (1960: 314).

[12] Because of the presence of specialized commentaries that treat the subject extensively and also because it is such a vast and hard to delimit subject, I have chosen in general to discuss this aspect of Hellenistic interaction with the past only marginally, except in one case where, as I argue, a Homeric *hapax legomenon* is employed by Theocritus and Apollonius to pronounce on their status as poets in relation with the poetic practices of the past (Chapter 8).

[13] Besides Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004), the most important studies focusing on the appearance of (poets of) the past in Hellenistic poetry are: Gabathuler (1937) a complete if somewhat dated overview of Hellenistic epigrams on poets; Bing (1988) which focuses on the shift from orality to literacy and the way it affects the representation of poets in Hellenistic poetry; Bing (1991), which treats some epigrams ascribed to Theocritus on the poets of the past from the angle of ancient biography; Barbantani (1991), which describes the representation of the canonic lyric poets in Hellenistic epigram; Hunter (1996), which

This is well illustrated with an example from the poetry of Callimachus. Several passages in his *Aetia* have been marked out as vital for understanding his views on poetry; most importantly the so-called *Prologue* (fr. 1 Pf.) and the *Dream* (fr. 2 Pf.), both found near the opening of the poem. As the complex *Prologue* will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4, we may leave it aside for the moment and turn to the *Dream*. Although little of this passage is left, a combination of *testimonia* and fragments suggest that in it Callimachus recounted how he was transported in a dream from Libya to mount Helicon, where he met the Muses, who answered his questions on the origins (*aitia*) of sacrifices and cults. Their explanations form the subject of the *Aetia*.[14] The most important *testimonium* to confirm that this was more or less the gist of the passage is the following (late) epigram:[15]

AP 7.42 (*Adespoton*)

Ἆ μέγα Βαττιάδαο σοφοῦ περίπυστον ὄνειαρ,
  ἦ ῥ᾽ ἐτεὸν κεράων οὐδ᾽ ἐλέφαντος ἔης.
τοῖα γὰρ ἄμμιν ἔφηνας, ἅτ᾽ οὐ πάρος ἀνέρες ἴδμεν
  ἀμφί τε ἀθανάτους ἀμφί τε ἡμιθέους,
εὖτέ μιν ἐκ Λιβύης ἀναείρας εἰς Ἑλικῶνα
  ἤγαγες ἐν μέσσαις Πιερίδεσσι φέρων·
αἱ δέ οἱ εἰρομένῳ ἀμφ᾽ ὠγυγίων ἡρώων
  Αἴτια καὶ μακάρων εἶρον ἀμειβόμεναι.

O, great and famous dream of the able Battiad, truly you were made of horn and not of ivory. For you showed us such things regarding gods and heroes as before we men did not know, when you lifted him up and transported him from Libya to Helicon, and brought him amidst the Pierids. And they told him in answer to his questions about the *Aetia* of ancient heroes and gods.

Of course, this poetical investiture on Helicon by the Muses was meant to call to mind another ancient poet: the author of the *Theogony*, Hesiod, especially of course *Theogony*, vv. 22–23:

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discusses the way archaic lyric forms are reinterpreted and recycled in Theocritus' poetry; Radke (2007) which reverts to point of view that Hellenistic poetry represents a complete break with tradition; Morrison (2007), which treats the narrator in archaic and Hellenistic poetry; due to their recent appearance, I have regrettably not been able to take these last two studies fully into account.

[14] The seminal study on this passage is Kambylis (1965); see Benedetto (1993) for a more recent overview of scholarly work on this passage.

[15] The *testimonia* for the *Somnium* are *AP* 7.42 and Marcus Aurelius *Front. Epist.* 1.4.1; Prop. 3.3.1–12; *Schol. Flor. ad fr.* 2 Pf. See Massimilla (1996).

> αἵ νύ ποθ᾽ Ἡσίοδον καλὴν ἐδίδαξαν ἀοιδήν,
> ἄρνας ποιμαίνονθ᾽ Ἑλικῶνος ὕπο ζαθέοιο.
>
> They [the Muses] were the ones that taught Hesiod a beautiful song, while he was herding his sheep at the foot of holy Helicon.

Hesiod is indeed duly referred to in the most substantial fragment of the passage:

> ποιμ⌋ένι μῆλα νέμ⌊οντι παρ᾽ ἴχνιον ὀξέος ἵππου
> Ἡσιόδ⌋ῳ Μουσέων ἑσμὸ⌊ς ὅτ᾽ ἠντίασεν
> μ]ẹ́ν οἱ Χάεος γενεσ̣[... (fr. 3–4 *Mass.*)
>
> When the group of the Muses met the shepherd Hesiod as he was pasturing his sheep near the footprint of the swift horse [...] the creation of Chaos ...

Callimachus alludes to a poet of the past at the beginning of his poem to identify his aims as a poet. But how and why is Hesiod, the archaic hexameter poet of a genealogy of the gods, the model for Callimachus, the sophisticated Hellenistic librarian and author of learned elegy on the origins of obscure cults, which contains panegyric of the Ptolemies? And why did Callimachus have to be transported to Helicon, in a dream?

To start with the choice of the model: perhaps Hesiod's importance as a model should be sought in the tension between his likeness with and his difference from Callimachus. To start with the likeness, the *Theogony*, by virtue of being a genealogy of the gods, might be called an aetiological explanation of how everything in the cosmos came into existence. As has been pointed out,[16] the central tale of Prometheus teaching mankind to sacrifice to the gods (and cheat them out of the best bits of the victim by burning only the fat) is an aetiological story about forms of sacrifice (the main theme of the *Aetia*). Yet, unlike Hesiod, Callimachus is not a Boeotian shepherd who (apparently seriously) claims that he ran into the Muses on Helicon and started singing their praises. Although of course this begs the question whether Hesiod truly was what he claims to be in the *Theogony*; at any rate, in his day this apparently seemed a plausible way of representing oneself.

This may set us on the track of why Callimachus chose to represent his meeting with the Muses in a dream. It is true that Greek poetical initiations often take place in dreams.[17] We hear of the dreams of for

[16] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 54).

[17] Indeed, even the initiation in the *Theogony* was sometimes so understood in antiquity cf. Front. *Epist.* 1.4.1, although this is a mistake, partly inspired perhaps by the

instance Homer (who was visited by Helen), Pindar (by Persephone) and Aeschylus (by Dionysus).[18] After waking up the dreamer usually finds he is inspired to write wonderful poetry. Dreams thus symbolize access to a deeper, quasi-mystic form of knowledge and ability, and contact with the realm of the divine and the dead. Yet, as these examples show, the dreamer is always *visited*, i.e. he stays in one place, while a god, demon or the like comes to visit him. In Callimachus' case, the dreamer *himself is transported* to a specific place.[19] This situation is, as far as I could establish, unique in Greek poetical initiations.[20]

A narrator transported in a dream from Libya to Helicon, in a programmatic passage: this sends a complicated message. In a straightforward reading, we could say that, whereas Hesiod simply reported the fact that he met the Muses on Helicon, Callimachus problematizes the reality of such a meeting by adding the layer of the dream.[21] This emphasizes the (psychological and physical) distance separating the historical Callimachus from the historical Helicon and from the historical Hesiod's ini-

phrases κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῷ (9) and ἐννύχιαι (10) as if referring to a situation in a dream of the narrator (whereas in fact they refer to the *habitual* practices of the Muses), and partly perhaps by the fact that Callimachus did represent his (*Theogony*-based) meeting with the Muses thus (cf. Kambylis 1965: 57). For more dreams of poetic initiation, See Falter (1934: 80–88) and Kambylis (1965: 104).

[18] Dream of Homer: Isocr. *Hel.* 65; dream of Pindar: Paus. 9.23.3; dream of Aeschylus (Paus. 1.21.2); dream of Epimenides: Max. Tyr. 38.3b p. 439 14 Hob.= c22 p. 224 Dav. In *Phaed.* 60E Socrates recounts that he was visited by gods and instructed to occupy himself with philosophy (*mousikè tekhnè*). Herodas too tells of a meeting in a dream with a poetic model (probably Hipponax), *Mim.*8; the Anacreonta too open with a dream encounter with Anacreon (datable to the 2nd/1st century BC, according to West). Following the example of Callimachus, Prop. 3.3.1–12 also recounts of an encounter with Muses on Helicon, where he states that Ennius too has drunk from the Hippokrene, which may mean that Ennius too referred to the *Aetia*-prologue. The same could be guessed of Gallus, on the basis of Verg. *Ecl.* 6.64–65.

[19] Of predecessors, Callimachus' experience is perhaps most like to that of the Cretan sage, poet and oracle monger Epimenides (who slept for 70 years and spoke with a whole host of gods). The *Suda* s.v. mentions that he was able to leave his body. Other "ecstatic dreams," as they are called, occur in Parmenides (fr. 1); *Resp.*10.614-end (the Myth of Er); Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*. See van Lieshout (1980: 28–33). The knowledge obtained by dreamers in such experiences is usually of a more philosophical/eschatological nature.

[20] In some Latin passages apparently imitating this one, viz. Verg. *Ecl.* 6.64–65 and Prop. 3.3. 1–12, the poet is also initiated on Mt Helicon, but there is no explicit mention of how he came there, which, if we may believe *AP* 7.42 (5–6) was an explicit feature of Callimachus' version.

[21] Kambylis (1965: 58) explains the choice for a dream as follows: "So nur würde man ihm alles glauben, was er von seiner Weihung auf dem Dichterberg erzählte, und davon überzeugt werden dass Kallimachos, unmittelbar von den helikonischen Musen [...] Auftrag erhalten habe [...] der Poesie eine neue Richtung zu weisen." Hesiod might still

tiation by the Muses. Yet on another level, the distance to "fictional" Helicon is apparently covered without any difficulty, and the persona of Callimachus effortlessly finds himself in the "fictional" realm of the Muses, that is to say of poetical tradition.[22] This clearly signifies that Callimachus travels only with the mind, and in his books.[23] In a sense, Callimachus dream-sojourn on Mt Helicon with the talkative, erudite Muses is thus really an allegory of his inspiring and instructive search for the origins of cults and rituals in the Library of Alexandria.[24] Callimachus' Muses are the scrolls from the *Mouseion*, they tell him all he needs to know about all places in the world. Interestingly, in calling the dream κεράων (made of horn) the unknown epigrammatist of *AP* 7.42 stresses the truth of what the Muses told Callimachus in his dream. Through his textual representation of the world, based on studies of other textual representations of the world, Callimachus is able to reach truths about the *actual* world, or at least about its long-forgotten traditions. What this example demonstrates is that how Callimachus represents *Hesiod* should be considered if we wish to learn more about the way he perceives *himself* as a poet.

This theme, the various ways in which predecessors serve as a "window and mirror" for Hellenistic poets, will form the subject of the first part of this book. The observation in itself may not be entirely new,[25] but by framing it with theories from the field of social sciences, in particular

claim to have met the Muses while awake ("in dem Milieu noch lebendigen Glaubens und frommer Lebenshaltung."), Callimachus could not do so anymore. I think the issue of being convincing was not so much at stake as the issue of encoding a specific model of inspiration.

[22] Bing (1988: 70) emphasizes sleep's likeness to death (cf. the Gates of Sleep in Aen. 6.893–896) and holds that this experience of Callimachus thus mirrors the opening of the *Iambi* (fr. 193) where the dead Hipponax visits the living in Alexandria. Both passages, in his view, stress the rupture felt towards the literary past, which can only be reached through *necromantia* or death-like experiences. Of course this is true, but I here prefer to stress the fact that Callimachus sees the unlimited possibilities of imagination.

[23] Cf. for instance the remark at *Aet*. Fr. 75 (Acontius and Cydippe).

[24] Cf. Bing 1988: 44–45. "From this microcosm (i.e. the world of books) the poets reinterpreted the world outside." The passage may also be read as a variation on the *topos* of the omniscient Muses versus the limited knowledge of the poet in *Il*. B 484–485, the *locus classicus* when it comes to the relation of Muses and poet; that this was in fact the case seems to be suggested by AP 7.42, which stresses τοῖα γὰρ ἄμμιν ἔφηνας, ἅτ' οὐ πάρος ἀνέρες ἴδμεν, cf. ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν·

[25] As noted, the fact that the literature of the past plays an important role in the combination of tradition and innovation that characterizes Hellenistic poetry has especially been argued by Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004). However, they devote only one section of

Assmann's concept of "cultural memory" and Hobsbawm's "invention of tradition," I try to look at the broader cultural conditions influencing issues of creative reception, (problematic) literary appropriation, and the wish for continuity with the tradition from a new angle. I also focus on the *differences* between the various forms of introducing the poets of the past. The mere dropping of a name has a different significance and effect than the introduction of a poet as a speaking character in one's own poetry. What are underlying reasons for these diverse strategies and what the effects?

I will also put the question whether there is a distinction between the representation and employment of historical poets, like Homer and the tragedians, and mythical poets, like Orpheus (in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius) and Daphnis (in the *Idylls* of Theocritus) and how it can be defined and explained.

Poets of the Present

Although Hellenistic poets were constantly exploring their relationship with the past, it would surely go too far to say that they were not interested in their own time and surroundings, even if their poetry has often—and not entirely incorrectly—been considered a rarefied art for art's sake, written in an ivory tower, for a select company of *cognoscenti*:

> *Diese Literatur redet nicht zu den Vielen, ihr Reichtum an Voraussetzungen erschliesst sich allein dem Kenner, und ihre Sprache meidet es ebenso, Formeln der tradition unverändert zu übernehmen, wie sie sich vom Alltag distanziert. (...) Man ist unter sich, und die raren Dinge die man sich zu erzählen hat, vertragen keine Lauten Töne.* (Lesky, 1971: 788)

It is undeniable that expressions of aesthetic preference suggestive of such a picture are frequently found, in particular in Callimachus' poetry (e.g. in the *Prologue* of the *Aetia*, fr. 1 Pf.; the *Hymn to Apollo*, 102-end; the *Iambi*). Complete poetic wars have been reconstructed on the basis of these expressions. Thus, "the most famous literary quarrel in antiquity" (Rose, 1960: 325) allegedly took place between Callimachus and Apollonius. It was supposedly concerned with the question of whether epic

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a chapter (pp. 1–17) to the phenomenon of poetic predecessors as models in Hellenistic poetry. Recently, Radke (2007) has argued on the contrary that Hellenistic poets deliberately closed the past off from their own era, in order to free the way for their own innovative poetry.

poetry on heroic themes could still be written in the third century, as Apollonius had done in the *Argonautica*. More recent scholarship recognizes the difficulty of proving the existence of the quarrel and proposes that Callimachus' expressions should be considered from a rhetorical or strategic point of view as a means of creating a position *vis à vis* his readers.[26] But although the reality of the quarrel between Callimachus and Apollonius seems doubtful (Chapter 4 will cast a glance at the evidence usually adduced), the persistence with which it has been propounded does raise some questions. Why is the tone of Callimachus' declarations of aesthetics throughout so aggressive? Why has the story of the quarrel been accepted so readily by generations of scholars?

To answer such questions, it must be realized that the Alexandrian Library provided the link not only with poets of the past, but necessarily also with living contemporaries and their works. It is reasonable to assume that this particular social context was a formative influence on Hellenistic poetry, especially as the Library, the Museum and their fellows were in some way subsidized by the Ptolemaic court and hence dependent on its favors. Scholarship has always taken into account the fact that much Hellenistic poetry was produced at, or for the benefit of, a court, but the questions that have usually been studied in this context concentrate on its portrayal of royal ideology, and its "propagandistic" qualities.[27] What has not been asked enough is how the competition between the poets at court may have influenced the nature of their poetry. Focus on this rivalry produces a somewhat different picture of the declarations of aesthetic principle that are rife in the poetry of the age. This is the angle from which I approach the interaction of contemporary poets in Chapters 4 and 5. The social space in which

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[26] E.g. Lefkowitz (1981), who treats the matter from the point of view of biographical fictions in the *Vitae* of the Greek poets; Cameron (1995), whose revisionary book tends to read all of Callimachus' poetry with an eye on its rhetorical effects rather than as pronouncing on actual matters of poetical debate; Schmitz (1999), who applies modern literary theory to an analysis of the *Prologue* of the *Aetia*, and reaches broadly the same conclusions.

[27] Cf. e.g. Weber (1993) who tries to identify elements of Ptolemaic ideology or propaganda in Hellenistic Poetry in general; Effe (1995: 107–123) discusses possible ambivalences in panegyric poetry; Blum (1991) and Erskine (1995) explain the foundation of the Library and the Museum of Alexandria as a Ptolemaic bid for the heritage of Alexander the Great, i.e., Greek *paideia*; Hunter (2003) discusses questions of ideology in Theocritus' *Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus* (*Id.* 17). Yet another approach is Stephens (2003), who reads Hellenistic court poetry looking for Egyptian elements, which, according to her were included to legitimize the Ptolemaic rule towards the Egyptian populace.

Hellenistic poetry was composed, that is to say the field of tension between poets, colleagues, audiences, and patrons, could be described in terms of the modern sociologist Pierre Bourdieu as a "field of cultural production."

Although the negative and aggressive statements in this field have usually commanded more attention, I will also focus on the instances in which allegiance or praise are expressed with regard to the poetics of a contemporary; evidently they too form an integral part of the dynamics of Hellenistic poetic interaction. To illustrate this, another text concerning Callimachus and Hesiod may be cited. This is *AP* 9.507, the difficult epigram by Callimachus in praise of Aratus' *Phaenomena*. (The specific problems of text and interpretation will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5).

> Ἡσιόδου τόδ' ἄεισμα καὶ ὁ τρόπος· οὐ τὸν ἀοιδὸν
> ἔσχατον, ἀλλ' ὀκνέω μὴ τὸ μελιχρότατον
> τῶν ἐπέων ὁ Σολεὺς ἀπεμάξατο. χαίρετε, λεπταὶ
> ῥήσιες, Ἀρήτου σύντονος ἀγρυπνίη. (*AP* 9.507)

> This song and its style are Hesiod's; not that the man from Soloi [has imitated] the poet entire, although it must be admitted that he has imitated the sweetest part of his verses. All hail, refined discourses, product of Aratus' intense sleeplessness.

Callimachus here compliments Aratus for following Hesiod while not imitating him in every particular. Of course, the procedure he praises here is remarkably similar to what he has done in the *Aetia*. By paying Aratus this compliment, Callimachus both points to his own poetics and creates an alliance with the popular and successful author of the *Phaenomena*. This means that the epigram can and should be used to learn more about Callimachus' view of his own poetics. At the same time, it also shows something about his way of maneuvering among contemporaries in the social context of his own era.

Self-representation in the Age of the Book

The "Age of the Book" is what Rudolf Pfeiffer called the Hellenistic era; an important, and never entirely refuted statement[28] with repercussions both for the perception and practice of poets and their readers. In the

[28] Cameron (1995) has of course challenged this view, and offered welcome nuance on some points, but the essentially bookish nature of Hellenistic poetry goes unchallenged.

first place, Hellenistic poetry was in all likelihood written primarily to be read rather than performed. As Graham Zanker observes, "reading is a solitary process that removes the reader from the world around him. He lives instead in the world of the author and communicates only with him." (1987: 197). This means that the author of a written text has different, perhaps more sophisticated, means at his disposal for communication with the reader than a speaker: a reader may turn back to passages he has already read and thus grasp intertextual allusions and other literary niceties more easily than a listener. However, the fact that he is writing for readers also means that the author has to make sure the reader understands who is communicating with him through the medium of written text as opposed to speech. The reader cannot see him, only form an image of him on the basis of the text. Self-representation is therefore important in written poetry as a means of identifying the author as author towards the reader.

By the Hellenistic age, as Peter Bing recognizes in his 1988 study, authors had become readers, namely of texts of the past, more consciously than ever before. This means that the Muse who inspired them was a "well-read Muse." She was not, as in Homer, omniscient through her divine presence at the legendary occasions she described to the poet, but, figuratively, through her wide browsing in the library.[29] In other words, Hellenistic poets were heavily dependent upon written sources, both literary and scholarly, for their inspiration. Often they implicitly or explicitly acknowledged the fact that these texts formed their primary inspiration. In what way did this influence their self-representation? Is the fact that their art is embedded in the culture of reading and writing a discernible element in their self-representation?

To answer such questions I will analyze the famous *sphragis of Posidippus*, in which he characterizes himself and his works. Such self-representations should be related to the fictive epitaphs for dead poets, discussed in the first chapter. Looked at from this angle, they suggest things about the way Hellenistic poets wished to enter the literary tradition they were so acutely aware of. I will also look at the adoption of, as I argue, significant alternative names (e.g. Callimachus' "patronymic" Battiades) or the creation of enigmatic alter egos (e.g. Simichidas in Theocritus' seventh *Idyll*). The instances named here have invited a great amount of critical attention that has however failed to provide completely convincing

[29] Bing (1988): *The Well-Read Muse, Present and Past in Callimachus and the Hellenistic Poets.*

solutions.[30] The name Battiades harbors more significance than a mere patronymic, and the figure of Simichidas is more complex than an alter ego.

Besides unambiguous identification and enigmatic alter egos, there are also poems in which first—person speakers are in no way identifiable with the author, most notably in the so-called mimetic *Hymns* of Callimachus. These poems resemble mimes in that there is no external narrator but a first-person speaker, apparently involved at the moment of speech in the procedure of the festival of a particular god. The mimetic element of these poems has received a good deal of attention, mostly focusing on the way in which Callimachus invites his readers to participate actively in imagining the context that is hinted at in the text (the so-called technique of the *Ergänzungsspiel*, which is also found in Callimachus' epigrams).[31] I will argue that this practice may be related to the particular circumstances under which Callimachus worked, that is, as a scholar-poet in the Library of Alexandria. Ultimately, it is a manifestation of Callimachus' own perception of his position in literary tradition.

Scholarly occupation in the library also influenced the way in which Hellenistic poets represented the issue of revealed knowledge derived from the Muses. If Callimachus could not or did not wish to claim that he had actually met these goddesses on Helicon, the question arises how he and his learned colleagues did view and represent inspiration. It comes as no surprise that texts from the literary past played a great role in this matter. The last chapter discusses a case that illustrates this particularly well. It is concerned with the use that Apollonius and Theocritus make of the Homeric *hapax legomenon hypophetes* and its variant *hypophetor* in contexts addressing questions of inspiration and poetic authority. Although the use of this rare word by both poets has been noted and discussed,[32] scholars have not drawn conclusions about the representation of poetic inspiration and authority that may be reached when all passages in which these words occur are connected.

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[30] On Callimachus, see in particular White (1999: 168–181); the bibliography on Theocritus' seventh *Idyll* comprises over 200 titles. A good overview of the most important currents in the interpretation of the identities of Simichidas and Lycidas is provided by Hunter (1999, introduction to *Idyll* 7).

[31] The term *Ergänzungsspiel* is Bing's (1995: 117–123). The process has been analyzed for the *Hymns* by Harder (1992: 384–394); Bing (1993: 181–198); Depew (1993: 57–77).

[32] Most commentaries on either poet have commented on the occurrence of the word, with different degrees of accuracy and insight; besides there is the excellent article by González (2000: 270–292).

CHAPTER ONE

POETIC PREDECESSORS IN EPIGRAM

1.1. *From Greece to Alexandria*

The foundation of the Ptolemaic Library and Museum made Alexandria into the intellectual center of the Hellenistic world, a shrine of Greece's literary and intellectual heritage, towards which scrolls from all over the known world gravitated, just like the scholars and poets who studied them. An epigram on the new Posidippus Papyrus (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309), as Peter Bing argues, illustrates the idea that Greece's literature had traveled from its old home to the harbor of Alexandria. It describes the dedication of a lyre brought to land by "Arion's dolphin" on the coast of Alexandria and a song (?) about it at the shrine of Arsinoe Philadelphus, the wife and sister of Ptolemy II.

Ἀρσινόη, σοὶ ṭή [ν]δε λύρην ὑπὸ χειρ [.......]
  Φθεγξαμ[ένηṅ] δελφὶς ἤγαγ' Ἀριόνιο [ς·]
ọὐ̣ρῆι̣ ἕ̣λ' οὐ [βλάψ]ạς ἐκ κύματος ἀλλ' ὅτ[ε σώσας]
  κ̇εῖνος αν[.....]ς λευκὰ περᾶι πελά[γη]
—πολλὰ πο[εῖ φιλ]ότητι καὶ αἰόλα—τῆι π̣[ανοδύρτωι
  φωνῆι π[ῆμ' ἔλ]ακον καινὸν ἀηδον[ίδες.]
ἄνθεμα δ', [ὦ Φιλ]ạδελφε, τὸν ἤλασεν [......]ιων,
  τόνδε δẹ́[χου, .]ύσου μείλια ναοπόλọ[υ.] (AB 37)

To you Arsinoe, this lyre, which the hands [of a bard] made resonant, was brought by Arion's dolphin. With its tail, it lifted it from the wave without [damage], but when [after saving it] [unexpectedly] it goes on its journey through the white sea—it does many various things through [kindness]—with [all-plaintive] voice, the nightingales lamented the novel [calamity]. As an offering, [O] Brother—[loving one] receive this [...] which [A]rion brought forth, a present from [.]ysus the temple guard.[1]

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[1] This translation, based on the text and translation of Austin and Bastianini, is more or less *exempli gratia*. Some notes on the text: 1 *fin.* χειρ[ὶ μελωιδο]ῦ? χειρ[ὸς ἀοιδο]ῦ *vel* χειρ[ὸς ἀδηλο]ῦ Austin | 3 Austin | 4 ἀν[ιηθεὶ]ς *brevius spatio* ἀν[ωΐστω]ς *fort. longius* | 5–6 Austin|6 κανον pap.| 7 [οἶμον Ἀρ]ίων *e.g.* Austin| 8 Λ]ύσου, Μ]ύσου, Ν]ύσου *aeditui nomen* μιλια pap.

Bing suggests:

> The poem represents a striking example of how an object, the lyre, may be made to embody the cultural historical heritage and become (quite literally) the vehicle by which that heritage is transmitted to a new place. (...) The epigram clearly alludes to the legend of Arion, "the best singer in the world" (...) by describing how his lyre—together with the tradition it evokes—came to Egypt. Thus the poet links the third-century BC shrine of Arsinoe to one of the great figures of archaic poetry from the seventh century and with him to the rich tradition of Lesbian lyric including Terpander, Sappho and Alcaeus. (...) That is, (...) emblematic of the Ptolemies' claim to be the true inheritors and guardians of the literary legacy of Hellas, in particular here the great tradition of Lesbian song. The Lesbian lyre has passed on; today its home is Egypt.[2]
>
> (Bing, 2004: 128–130)

A similarly striking interest in the continuity with and renewal of the Greek literary heritage is evident in many other poetical expressions of the Hellenistic age, as we shall presently see.

1.2. *Greek Poets and Their Predecessors*

Preoccupation with the literature of the past is of course not an exclusively Hellenistic phenomenon, even if its intensity may be peculiar to this age. The early Greeks already honored poets of the past as sages and artists, as various texts, portrait statues, and vase paintings from as early as the sixth century BCE affirm.[3] Such authors might be regarded as positive examples, a standard by which one's own works might be measured and which provided instruction.[4] Other critical assessments, in both the negative and neutral senses of the term, are also common in archaic

[2] Cf. Austin and Bastianini (2002: 60): *Arsinoae Philadelpho lyram, quam ab undis delphinus servaverat, et carmen Arionium (v 7 s.) dedicat fani sacerdos.* Bing furthermore links this passage with Phan. fr. 1 Powell, where the severed head and lyre of Orpheus undertake a similar sea journey. They reach Lesbos and there become the fountainhead of lyric poetry.

[3] The exceptional status of poets is also demonstrated by the cults that many of them enjoyed, cf. Clay (2004).

[4] For instance, Aeschylus claimed that his tragedies were "only slices from the banquet of Homer" (Ath. 8.347); Antiphon remarks upon the usefulness of knowing the ancient poets (P. Oxy. III 414 coll. i–iii); Critias' comments on Anacreon emphasize the immortal charm of his poetry (Ath. XIII 600D–E). See on the topic of portrait statues of the ancient poets in particular Schefold (1965) and Zanker (1995), who argues for a relationship between portraiture and biographical interests (1995: 145).

poetry: in *N.* 7.20–23, Pindar attributes the undue admiration later generations had for Odysseus to Homer's captivating representation of this hero;[5] in *P.* 2 he disparages the vicious poetic attacks of Archilochus.[6] It is clear that poetry of the past for Pindar provides a rubric for assessing the qualities of later works, including his own. His remarks thus shed light on key elements of his own poetics: poetry should combine an elevated style with truth and praise of valor and exceptional feats. Assessments of ancient poetry, then, were always potentially formative in the production of new poetry.

An interest in poets of the past as *historical persons* also developed early on in Greek history; this resulted in biographies.[7] The general idea behind ancient biographical writing is expressed in maxims like "*talis oratio, qualis vita*,"[8] which can be understood as a moral admonition as well as a hermeneutic device: since little documentary evidence about the lives of ancient authors was available, their writings often served as sources of information.[9] Together with random items of fantasy, gossip, and anecdote, this information formed the basis of biographical writing, of which traces are found in the *Vitae* and *Scholia*. This writing of biographical essays gained new momentum in the Hellenistic era, when Greek literature and information relating to it were gathered and studied professionally on a previously unequaled scale. Scholars working in the

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[5] *N.* 7.20–23: ἐγὼ δὲ πλέον' ἔλπομαι / λόγον Ὀδυσσέος ἢ πάθαν / διὰ τὸν ἁδυεπῆ γενέσθ' Ὅμηρον· / ἐπεὶ ψεύδεσί οἱ ποτανᾷ ⟨τε⟩ μαχανᾷ / σεμνὸν ἔπεστί τι· σοφία / δὲ κλέπτει παράγοισα μύθοις. (I believe that Odysseus' story has become greater than his actual suffering because of Homer's sweet verse, for upon his fictions and soaring craft rests great majesty, and his skill deceives, with misleading tales, transl. Race).

[6] *P.* 2.54–56: εἶδον γὰρ ἑκὰς ἐὼν τὰ πόλλ' ἐν ἀμαχανίᾳ / ψογερὸν Ἀρχίλοχον βαρυλόγοις ἔχθεσιν / πιαινόμενον· (For standing at a far remove I have seen Archilochos blame often in straits as he fed on dire words of hatred, transl. Race).

[7] Tatian (2nd cent. CE) names as the first researchers on the poetry and life of Homer Theagenes of Rhegium, Stesimbrotus of Thasos, Herodotus, and Antimachus of Colophon (31 p. 61, 16 Schw.). Hellanicus of Lesbos (fifth cent. BCE) is considered by some the true father of literary history (cf. Lanata 1969: 234). According to Proclus he wrote on the life and dates of e.g. Hesiod, Homer, Orpheus and Terpander (*schol. in Hesiod. Op.* 631). Other early "literary historians" are Damastes (fifth cent. BCE) (*Vit. Hom. Rom.* p. 30, 24.), and Glaucus of Rhegium (fifth cent. BCE) (Plut. *de mus.* 4 p. 1132E; 7 p. 1133F).

[8] Seneca (*Ep.* 114), cf. Cicero (*Tusc.* 5.47).

[9] E.g. the identification of Demodocus, the Phaeacian singer with Homer and hence his representation as a blind bard, or the remarks in the Pindar-*scholia* on Pindar's quarrels with Bacchylides and Simonides as extrapolated from references to "silly crows" in his odes. On the development and characteristics of ancient biographical writing, see Bruns (1896), Leo (1901), Momigliano (1971), Lefkowitz (1981).

Library of Alexandria sought biographical data to attach to their editions of and works on the poets.[10] The information found its way into the poetic production of the time, since the poets in question were often the selfsame scholars who had gathered the data. In this way, two practices, one of poets evaluating their predecessors as poets and one of scholars studying and commenting upon poetry and poets of the past, flowed together.

1.3. *Royal Patronage and Cultural Memory*

The scholars and poets in the Library of Alexandria, who largely worked under the aegis of royal patronage, thus seem emphatically engaged with their relation to the literature of the Greek past.[11] Their attitude is probably representative of what happened across the other royal libraries of this time.[12] How may this preoccupation be explained?

Alexandria was a relatively new city, which had been founded by the recently deceased and immediately legendary Alexander the Great, whose aim had arguably been to spread Greek culture throughout the known world. Being a harbor, Alexandria literally looked towards Greece and the Mediterranean, at that time dominated by the Greeks, both economically and culturally, rather than to the Egyptian mainland.[13] So, although her inhabitants came from all over the world, the dominant

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[10] E.g. Callimachus' *Pinakes* (Blum 1991); *Grapheion* (fr. 380 Pf.), *Mouseion* (Pfeiffer 1949: 339); Apollonius' studies on Archilochus, cf. Pfeiffer (1968: 141); Fraser (1972: II 653, nn. 38–39). On ancient literary scholarship in general, see Pfeiffer (1968). More recently e.g. Bing (1993b: 619–631), Rossi (2001: 86–91); on the study of Homer's texts, see Rengakos (1993; 1994; 2001).

[11] On Hellenistic patronage see e.g. Fraser (1972: I, 305–336), Bulloch *et al.* (1993), Weber (1993), Erskine (1995: 38–48), Strootman (2007: 189–246). Callimachus and Apollonius enjoyed the royal support of the Ptolemies, like Aratus and Euphorion at the court of Antiochus. It is likely that Theocritus, Posidippus and Herondas (successfully or otherwise) sought some form of Ptolemaic patronage. In other cases this is doubtful, e.g. Leonidas, Nossis.

[12] The rivalry between the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamon was notorious, cf. Platthy (1968: 144–148).

[13] Cf. Fraser (1972: I, 3–37), cf. the later expression "*Alexandria ad Aegyptum*" (Alexandria near Egypt), which implies it was not seen as an Egyptian city. Although, as underwater archaeology in the Alexandrian harbor has shown, the Ptolemies did depict themselves in pharaonic guise for the benefit of their Egyptian subjects, Alexandrian poetry (presumably aimed at a smaller, more elitist subculture of Greeks) hardly even acknowledges the fact that Alexandria is situated in Egypt (and if it does, Egyptians are named in a pejorative sense, cf. Theoc. *Id.* 15. 46–50). However, for arguments in favor

culture was Greek. Yet, unlike many of the earlier Greek settlements, for instance Cyrene, Alexandria was not a colony tied to a single mother city by established cultural traditions, legends, and habits. All of Greece was, in a sense, the mother city of Alexandria.[14] She became the capital and seat of a new Macedonian royal house under Ptolemy Soter, a former general of Alexander and one of the most successful of the successor kings. Ptolemy's ambition seems to have been to found a dynasty and to proclaim himself the rightful inheritor of Alexander's legacy.[15] It was presumably to this end that he took charge of the embalmed body of Alexander and moved it from Memphis, the previous capital of Egypt, to newfounded Alexandria, much nearer to the old Greek world. The guardianship over Alexander's earthly remains symbolized the guardianship over his imperial legacy. It is attractive to interpret Ptolemy Soter's interest in preserving Hellenic culture and supporting learning, demonstrated by his establishment of the Library and the Museum, also as claims to the inheritance of Alexander, to Greek *paideia*.[16]

His son Ptolemy Philadelphus, who had been educated by the learned scholar-poet Philitas, was an even more consummate lover of Greek literature, as the flowering of poetry and scholarship under his reign testifies. By eagerly supporting the Library, the Museum and its researchers, he continued what his father had begun and made Alexandria the intellectual center of the Hellenistic world.[17] After him, Ptolemy Euergetes continued this patronage of scientists, scholars and poets.

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of the presence of *Egyptian* cultural elements in Hellenistic poetry, see Stephens (2002: 235–263); (2003, *passim*); (2005: 229–249), Hunter (2003). The main objection to this mode of reading is that it fails to make clear who the intended beneficiaries of the alleged Egyptian elements in this elitist poetry are and why.

[14] Cf. Fraser (1972: I, 3–37), Weber (1993: 81).

[15] E.g. *Id.* 17.16–32. Ptolemy Soter is sitting on Olympus together with Alexander, and both are identified as great-grandsons of Heracles. In the same poem, the emphasis is on the fact that Ptolemy Philadelphus is so *like* his father (17.40–44; 52–57).

[16] On the establishment of the Library and the Museum, see Pfeiffer (1968: 127), Fraser (1972: I, 321, ff.), Weber (1993: 74–82), Tanner (2006: 79–95), Euseb. *HE* 5.8.11, Plut. *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 13.1095d. On the peripatetic influence of Demetrius of Phaleron on its organization: Plut. *De exilio* 601; *Reg. Apophth.* 189d. On Aristotle as inspiring the Ptolemies to collect books, see Str. 13.1.54.

[17] For a contemporary reference to Ptolemaic patronage of literature, cf. e.g. Theoc. *Id.* 17.111–116. Other poems clearly written with an eye to Ptolemaic patronage are e.g. Herond. *Mim.* 1, Call. *Aetia*, Theoc. *Id.* 14, 15, 17, perhaps also 24 and 18, cf. Griffiths (1979: 51–107) and a number of the epigrams by Posidippus on Ptolemaic monuments and victories in horse races.

If the possession of the Greek literary heritage symbolically represented the guardianship of Greek *paideia*, then it followed that its possessors were the inheritors of Greek (cultural) hegemony.[18] Who mastered it and was able to deliver the right interpretation or emulation of its texts was a true Greek. This sufficiently explains the Ptolemies' well-documented interest in the learnedness they fostered in the Museum and the Library and their willingness to inject considerable financial support into these institutions.[19]

Naturally, this environment left its mark upon the poetry and poetic concerns of the poets affiliated to such institutions. The Greek literary heritage was emphatically their domain and point of reference.[20] Indeed, they were presumably warmly encouraged to produce new poetry that reflected (on) the past splendors of Greek culture. It is therefore no surprise if Hellenistic poets stressed continuity with their poetical forebears rather than discontinuity.[21] It follows, then, that the characteristics they emphasized in the representation of their predecessors both reveal something about the way they saw their poetic past and the way they (wished to) see themselves. Ancient Greek poetry provided them with a window and a mirror, an object to reflect upon and reflect oneself in at the same time.

It is enlightening to relate this Hellenistic, and more in particular Alexandrian, interest in the Greek Cultural legacy to Jan Assmann's theories on the concept of "Cultural Memory."[22] According to Assmann, social groups, especially when severed from a continuous cultural past,

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[18] Cf. *DNP s.v. Mouseion*: "In the Hellenistic context, the generous patronage [sc. of literature, scholarship and science] of a monarch became a manifestation of his royal authority." See on this topic e.g. Erskine (1995: 38–48). Further references and bibliography in Fraser (1972: I, 305–336), Weber (1993), and Strootman (2007: 202–216).

[19] Cf. e.g. Timon *SH* 786 (cf. Ch. 4.1), Philostrat. *Soph.* 1.22.3 sketches the same image for the time of Hadrian, saying that the Museum constituted a "banquet hall comprising the most eminent guests among the Greeks." Several other anecdotes reflect the kings' lively interest in scholarly activities (Ath. 11,493e–494b; 12,552c). The ties between court and Museum were close: the princes' tutors usually were the directors of the Library as well (cf. P. Oxy. 1241 for a list of names). For the physical connection between Museum, Library and the court, cf. Str. 17.1.8, who claims these institutions were part of the royal grounds. See further Pfeiffer (1968: 127), Weber (1993: 87–90).

[20] Cf. e.g. Callimachus' Πίνακες; Tzetzes names Alexander Aetolus, Lycophron and Eratosthenes as working in the Library (*Prol. ad Arist. Pb* 119).

[21] Cf. Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: vii–viii); contrast e.g. Bing (1988), Radke (2007) who argue that the Hellenistic poets felt a distinct rupture with previous Greek literary culture.

[22] See for a synopsis Assmann (1997: introduction).

have a tendency to create or reinforce their own identity by means of a collective memory determined by the consciously or unconsciously posed question: "What is it that we as a group should remember?" In answering this question, they select and create distinctive memories of a shared past to which certain events and texts are central. These are constructed as *Erinnerungsfiguren* (i.e., symbolical commemorative tropes) with sacred, religious, or festive characteristics, such as a calendar with sacred holidays or a festival commemorating the foundation of a city. Ancient texts and the societal values deriving from them, such as the Torah, Bible, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod's *Theogony*, play a great role in such collective memory. The fact that the interpretation or significance of such ancient texts and festivals often is no longer self-evident calls for specialized exegetes who assume responsibility for the cultural heritage. These may be poets, priests, sages, scholars, teachers or the like. They influence the collective cultural memory through *Textpflege* and *Sinnpflege*, the establishment and interpretation of canonical texts and the control and interpretation of ritual. This is similar to what was done in the Alexandrian Library. The texts studied and created here provided both the court and the scholar-poets with important items with which to construct their identities and celebrate and justify their Greekness. References to the poetry of the past might therefore appeal to a shared knowledge and thus create a feeling of belonging. But, as we shall see, they often also took the form of allusion to obscure facts and complex tongue-in-cheek appropriation of literary tradition, aimed at providing only those in the know with a sense of belonging to an intellectual elite. Greek literature thus became both a common ground and a playground of the *literati*.

1.4. *Which Poets and What Past?*

If Hellenistic monarchs and the poets in their service were occupied with the intellectual tradition of the great Greek past, who did they focus on and how did they view them? It is generally believed that, to a Hellenistic scholar looking at the past, a kind of watershed would seem to have occurred in the fifth century, dividing the poetry modern scholarship considers "archaic" (broadly speaking, to the mid-fifth century) from the "Atheno-centric" (i.e., classical) poetry of the later fifth century. For one thing, Hellenistic poets did not write for the benefit of a democratic polis, but for that of elitist royal courts. The poetic diversity at these courts will

moreover have resembled that of the Archaic age rather than that of the classical era:

> The triumph of Athenian culture could have been seen as the death knell for the rich tapestry of poetic forms to be found in the centuries before that triumph. (...) The variety of geographical centres for poetry in the Hellenistic world, the ever increasing importance of patronage and the burgeoning number of poetic festivals, competitions and opportunities for *epideixis* in the Hellenistic age may well have seemed more like the picture of poetic production which emerged from archaic texts than the rather monolithic image projected by the later fifth century in which the predominance in the field of Attic tragedy and comedy drove other high poetry from the field.[23] (Hunter, 1996: 3)

Indeed, as their poetry shows, it was the archaic, or pre-Athenian age the Hellenistic poets looked to, principally. Even so, they must have realized that this era also presented important differences with their own poetic practices. For one thing, in the days of ancient (choral) lyric, poetry, melody, and dance had been an indissoluble complex, as the complicated meters and stanzaic structures attest. This had gradually changed; music and poetry had become increasingly separate areas.[24] Predominant in Hellenistic poetry were the recitative elegiac distich, iambus and hexameter, even if Callimachus and Theocritus occasionally imitated the complex meters of archaic lyric.[25] This means that the compositional practice of a Hellenistic poet was more limited than that of an archaic lyric poet: texts as such were much more the central concern of the former than of the latter.[26]

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[23] Cf. Cameron (1992: 305–312). Still, this representation needs some nuance: although the fifth-century Athenian cultural dominance may look monolithic to the modern eye, the Hellenistic Greeks must have been aware that various literary cultures had existed at royal courts in the classical era too. Hiero I of Syracuse commissioned poetry from Pindar, Bacchylides, and Aeschylus; Archelaus of Macedon apparently had ties with Euripides. Drama, moreover, was not the only viable form of poetry, even if it is the form best preserved.

[24] As early as the late fifth century, there was a gradual dissolution of song culture, which was replaced in part by a book culture and in part by a music culture dominated by virtuoso musicians; the development is discussed by Herington (1985).

[25] Theoc. *Id.* 28, 29, 30; Call. fr. 226, 227, 228, 229 Pf. Papyrus finds of the third century attest that musical notation was not the default expectation in the preservation of archaic lyrical poetry, cf. Hunter (1996: 5, n. 19). For a recent overview and discussion of the material, see Prauscello (2006).

[26] To nuance this picture, one should however consider that the predominance of the recitative meters precisely started in the classical era (cf. also the progressively reduced use of choral songs in theatre) and that Hellenistic epigram evidences a relatively large use of lyric meters.

Balancing similarities and differences, archaic poetic practice nevertheless showed more resemblance to the Hellenistic mode of working than classical, in particular Athenian, poetry did. This is one reason why most poets represented in the Hellenistic epigrams, which form the focus of this chapter, belong to the "pre-Athenian" age.[27] There is also a number of epigrams on poets belonging to a more recent past, the fourth century, when literary sensibilities had presumably evolved in the direction of those found in Hellenistic poetry. But, as was to be expected, Athenian poets of the fifth century are underrepresented.[28]

This temporary disappearance from view of the relatively recent past and its fashions in favor of a more distant era, which is considered to be more directly connected to the present, however, also resembles a universal pattern in the handling of the past of social groups. This socio-cultural pattern was first discerned and theorized in connection with oral cultures by Jan Vansina and later adapted by Assmann, who notes that something similar occurs in literate cultures.[29] Remembrance generally falls into a tripartite structure: the recent past which forms part of communicative memory (the memories of living people);[30] the more distant past, which falls into a so-called "floating gap" (*fliessende Lücke*, and is outside of living memory), and the very distant past, the time of "origins," which has entered the official historical record, as "tradition," or "myth." The occurrence of the floating gap turns genealogies and accounts of national histories into figures with a head and feet, but no body in between, as Vansina expresses it.[31] In other words, the recent past that still forms part of living memory is acknowledged, while what is older is often somehow "invisible" to those who remember. The primeval

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[27] For the corpus of the epigrams discussed, see Appendix.

[28] Dramatists of the Hellenistic age may of course have had an interest in the dramatic productions of the fifth century, cf. Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 404–437), but no epigrams of their hand survive. Epigrams discussing Athenian playwrights are *AP* 7.410 (Thespis); 7.411 (Aeschylus); 7.37, 7.21, 7.22, (Sophocles); 7.46 (Euripides); 13.29 (Cratinus). It should be remarked that *AP* 7.410; 7.411 and 7.37 form part of a series, written by Dioscorides, who is a generation or two later than the avant-garde Hellenistic poets such as Callimachus, and has a predilection for antiquarianism. Dioscorides' epigrams on Sositheus and Machon (*AP* 7.707; 7.708, discussed in chapter 5) also evidence a keen interest on the part of third century dramatists for their classical predecessors.

[29] Assmann (1997: 48–53).

[30] Assmann (with references to the Bible and Roman historiography) explicitly sets this period at eighty years, or the ideal lifetime for humans (1997: 49).

[31] Vansina (1985: 23).

times in which myths of origin are located therefore seem to connect seamlessly with the present, or at least with the recent past.

Earlier facts, the items that fall outside living memory, have generally undergone a process of selection, tradition and crystallization that has formed and ordered them into a repertoire of stock items which makes up the identity of a social group (e.g. because they have entered the school curriculum or are included in libraries; they are the accepted stuff of cultural memory). In this context it is significant to remember Quintilian's claim that the poetry of the Hellenistic scholar-poets was in fact *not* included in their own library by their younger contemporaries.[32] Apparently their works had not yet become rooted in the cultural memory; their work was still up for discussion.

1.5. *Poetical Predecessors in Epigram*

From a literary-historical point of view, therefore, the early Hellenistic period is a paradox. On the one hand, the giants of Greek literature such as Homer, Archilochus, and Pindar were geographically, linguistically and chronologically remote from the age of the Alexandrian Library. Yet, the texts and biographical data of these poets had never been studied so closely and documented so professionally, made available to so many people or preserved for future generations in such a secure way as precisely in this age.[33] The two sides of this paradox are visible in the epigrams written in this period. Epitaphs or dedications on statues of predecessors who had been dead for hundreds of years became popular, testifying to the perception that the literary past existed as a kind of monument, something dead, yet alive: for these epitaphs on long-dead poets actually demonstrate the vivid interest and admiration they still aroused.[34] Another aspect of this admiration of the past was the revival of dead poets by explicitly lending them the living authors' own voice

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[32] Quint. 10.1.54.

[33] On the greatness of the Alexandrian Library: *Ath.* 5.203d–e; the *Letter of Aristeas* claims that Demetrius of Phaleron began with 200.000 scrolls and hoped to see the collection grow to at least 500.000; similarly Gell. *NA* 7.17.3. By the time the library was burnt down in 48/47 BCE by Caesarean troops, Ammianus Marcellinus claims 700.000 scrolls were lost in the fire (22.16.13), although Seneca estimates that there were only 400.000 (*Tranq.* 9.5). See in general Parsons (1967), Canfora (1989), McLeod (2004).

[34] Cf. Bing (1988, *passim*).

(*ethopoiia*). This might be interpreted as a metaphor for the fact that the literary heritage was so close to the Hellenistic poets that it was in fact internalized, digested, and incorporated into their own poetry. They spoke with the voices of the dead, or vice versa (cf. also below).

From a literary point of view, it is easy to see the attraction of such epitaphs and inscriptions. An epitaph is the ideal place to express a brief and final verdict about an individual's personality and life; an inscription on the base of a statue likewise furnishes concise and essential information to the viewer about the subject depicted. In both cases, the challenge is to condense the characteristics of the poet in question as wittily and recognizably as possible. From the fifth century BCE onwards, such literary epigrams had already been written in books rather than on stone. They presented the fictitious variations on the original dedications and epitaphs. By the Hellenistic period, epigram had become a popular literary genre, improvised or recited at symposia and, more importantly, collected, or even written directly, in books.[35] That the epitaphs and purported inscriptions to be discussed here were of an exclusively literary nature is reasonably certain. As Peter Bing argues, it is the exception rather than the rule that texts on stone (i.e., genuine inscriptions) were cited on papyrus in antiquity.[36] This means that epigrams that claim to be inscriptions are for the most part really literary, whether referring to actual monuments or statues or not. I have here selected for discussion two topics that frequently recur in these succinct characterizations of ancient poets: the material form texts take when conserved on scrolls (e.g. in the Alexandrian Library) and the reconstruction of the character of an ancient poet as based on his writings. These items will be addressed in the following sections.

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[35] A parallel development is that of erotic epigram out of *skolia* (drinking songs) and erotic elegies originally orally improvised and recited at symposia. See on the topic e.g. Reitzenstein (1893), Wilamowitz (1924: I, 130–131), Cameron (1995: chapter 1); Gutzwiller (1998), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 283–291). Cameron's revisionary thesis that the Hellenistic period was a "second golden age of the symposium" has caused much discussion; although it was probably too extreme, it gave a welcome balance to the image of the Hellenistic Age as an age of *l'art pour l'art*, and of poets writing in an ivory tower.

[36] Bing (2002: 38–66); Obbink agrees: "The burden of proof lies on the shoulders of those who would claim that any of the epigrams that purport to be inscribed on an object were actually so inscribed, to show that they were ever actually cited from such a source." (2004: 19).

1.5.1. *The Text as Monument*

Whether referred to as singers or writers, the emphasis in Hellenistic epigrams on dead poets is specifically on the enduring quality or fame of their achievements,[37] through which an author is sometimes even claimed to live on eternally.[38] A key issue connected with this theme is the material form of the achievements: in a number of cases, this is explicitly a written text on a scroll not mere "song," as Bing has abundantly shown in his 1988 study on literacy in Hellenistic poetry, *The Well-read Muse*. This contrasts with the way in which archaic poets usually put immaterial fame in song (κλέος) over material monuments as a guarantee for immortality.[39] It seems that, through the widespread materialization of song in its written form in the Hellenistic age, the ideas of immaterial fame in song versus a material monument occasionally merge in the concept of the immortality of the words of a poem written on a scroll. In this section I will only discuss some instances of Hellenistic epigram where the paradoxes or unexpected implications of living on after death in poetical works are addressed.

Apart from actual poetic compositions (i.e., preserved works of the literary tradition), literary "inventions" (of a new poetic form or genre) ascribed to legendary inventors (the topos of the πρῶτος εὑρετής) could also grant some kind of immortality, usually of a vaguer and more disputable kind. To illustrate this, an epitaph for Orpheus (*AP* 7.9 Damagetus), the pre-historical and legendary singer/musician, whose legacy was disputed, may be compared with an epitaph on the historical dramatist Sophocles (*AP* 7.21 Simias), whose works indisputably survived. The following epigram describes the grave of Orpheus:

Ὀρφέα Θρηικίηισι παρὰ προμολῆισιν Ὀλύμπου
   τύμβος ἔχει, Μούσης υἱέα Καλλιόπης,
ὧι δρύες οὐκ ἀπίθησαν, ὅτῶι συνάμ' ἔσπετο πέτρη
   ἄψυχος θηρῶν θ' ὑλονόμων ἀγέλα,
ὅς ποτε καὶ τελετὰς μυστηρίδας εὕρετο Βάκχου
   καὶ στίχον ἡρώιωι ζεύκτον ἔτευξε ποδί,

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[37] E.g. *AP* 7.2, 7.5, 9.24 (Homer); 7.54 (Hesiod); 9.63 (Antimachus); 7.664 (Archilochus); Ath. 13.696, *AP* 7.407 (Sappho).

[38] E.g. *AP* 7.12 (Erinna); 7.25 (Anacreon); cf. more indirectly *AP* 7.408, 7.536, 13.3 (Hipponax). The fact that even in death Hipponax is dangerous implies that his legacy is immortal.

[39] E.g. Simon. *PMG* 531 (on the dead of Thermopylae), on which see Ford (2002: 105–111); see for further instances in archaic lyric Nünlist (1998: 115).

ὅς καὶ ἀμειλίκτοιο βαρὺ Κλυμένοιο νόημα
καὶ τὸν ἀκήλητον θυμὸν ἔθελξε λύραι. (*AP* 7.9)

A tomb in the Thracian foothills of Olympus contains Orpheus, son of the Muse Calliope, whom the oaks did not disobey, whom the lifeless rocks and the tribe of the wood-dwelling animals followed willingly, who once invented the mystic rituals of Bacchus and joined the stichic line to the heroic meter, who swayed both the grim will and unchangeable heart of inexorable Clymenus with his lyre.

The poem lists Orpheus' accomplishments and achievements: he was able to charm nature and is called the inventor of Bacchic mysteries and of "the line that was added to the hexameter" (i.e., the pentameter, significantly placed in the pentameter itself), a novel claim. His powers are emphasized by the choice of objects of enchantment (oaks, rocks, and wild animals with their topical connotations of immobility, toughness, and savageness) and the adjectives describing them.[40] The list ends with Orpheus' victory in swaying the adamant will of Hades (Clymenus) by his music. Significantly, however, no immortality is granted to Orpheus by virtue of any surviving works.[41] This suggests an ironic contrast between the great power he possessed when living (he even persuaded the god of the underworld) and its complete annulment at his death. The attribution of the pentameter and the institution of the Bacchic mysteries constitute a claim to remembrance, but Orpheus' enchanting songs are lost, while only an (imaginary) tomb remains. However, it should be noted that this description of the tomb is written in elegiac distichs, the meter Orpheus had invented, so that, paradoxically, he lives on in poetry after all, if not his own.

The following epigram by Simias, describing the tomb of Sophocles, provides a clear contrast to the vague description of Orpheus' possible legacy:

Τόν σε χοροῖς μέλψαντα Σοφοκλέα, παῖδα Σοφίλλου,
τὸν τραγικῆς Μούσης ἀστέρα Κεκρόπιον,

[40] Cf. A.R. *Arg.* 1.26–28. The epithet ἀκηλήτος is notable, as κηλεῖν (to enchant) is frequently found as a metaphor to describe the effects of poetry on an audience. Cf. Nünlist (1998: 132–133).

[41] There are other epitaphs in which there is no explicit mention of works, while Hellenistic poets did know them (e.g. *AP* 7.1 Homer; 7.55 Hesiod). However, the point in Damagetus' epitaph depends on the irony that Orpheus was so powerful (because of his music) during his life, while after death he is gone and all his music with him. Moreover, unlike Hesiod's and Homer's works, the authenticity of any legacy of Orpheus was doubted in antiquity, cf. Ch. 3.2.

πολλάκις ὃν θυμέλησι καὶ ἐν σκηνῇσι τεθηλὼς
 βλαισὸς Ἀχαρνίτης κισσὸς ἔρεψε κόμην,
τύμβος ἔχει καὶ γῆς ὀλίγον μέρος, ἀλλ' ὁ περισσὸς
 αἰὼν ἀθανάτοις δέρκεται ἐν σελίσιν. (*AP* 7.21)

You who sang in the choruses, Sophocles, son of Sophillus, you who shone as the Cecropian star of the Muse, who were so often crowned with winding Acharnian ivy in the orchestra and on the stage, a tomb now holds you, and but a little piece of the earth, but the rest of the ages sees you in your immortal papyrus-columns.[42]

The poem laments the fact that a great man like Sophocles should have gone the way of all flesh and died (1–5).[43] Up to this point, the scheme is quite similar to that of the epigram describing the tomb of Orpheus: the poet was exceptional during his life, but now he is dead and gone. However, the *pointe* of this poem is that Sophocles' fate differs from that of other humans because of his literary achievement. Sophocles lives on thanks to the preservation of his writings; the epigram forms an acknowledgement of the immortalizing powers of the written word.

A comparable idea, but elaborated with a remarkably different emphasis, is found in Posidippus' epigram on the hetaera Doricha, a contemporary of Sappho:

Δωρίχα, ὀστέα μὲν σὰ πάλαι κόνις ἦν ὅ τε δέσμος[44]
 χαίτης ἥ τε μύρων ἔκπνοος ἀμπεχόνη,
ᾗι ποτε τὸν χαρίεντα περιστέλλουσα Χάραξον
 σύγχρους ὀρθρινῶν ἥψαο κισσυβίων·
Σαπφῶιαι δὲ μένουσι φίλης ἔτι καὶ μενέουσιν
 ὠιδῆς αἱ λευκαὶ φθεγγόμεναι σελίδες
οὔνομα σὸν μακαριστόν, ὃ Ναύκρατις ὧδε φυλάξει
 ἔστ' ἂν ἴηι Νείλου ναῦς ἐφ' ἁλὸς πελάγη.
(Ath. 13.696/GP XVII/122 AB)

Doricha, your bones were dust long ago, and the band of your hair and your perfume-breathing shawl, wherewith you once wrapped the charming Charaxus, skin to skin, until you took hold of the morning cups. But the white columns of Sappho's lovely ode are still here and they will go on celebrating your most fortunate name, which Naucratis will thus treasure as long as ships sail from the Nile on the waves of the sea.
(transl. and text Austin and Bastianini)

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[42] For the problems of interpretation, see Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*). That this is the approximate meaning of the passage is however quite certain.

[43] This is a recurrent theme, cf. e.g. *AP* 7.1, 7.2 (Homer).

[44] The MS reading of this first line is problematic: Δωρίχα, ὀστέα μὲν σ' ἁπαλὰ κοιμήσατο δεσμῶν. Austin's text (with emendations of Casaubon, Jacobs and Meineke) is printed here.

In this poem, it is not the death of the poet that is contrasted with the immortality of her poetical legacy, but that of the subject of her poetry, Doricha. Athenaeus, who preserved the epigram, explains that Doricha enticed Sappho's brother, Charaxus, when he was sailing to Naucratis in Egypt for business. He claims that Sappho speaks ill of Doricha for preying on Charaxus' purse.[45] Surprisingly, there is no sign in the epigram of Sappho's negative treatment of Doricha, such as can indeed be found in fragments of her work. It merely claims that Doricha's fortunate name has been immortalized by Sappho's "white columns," which, to one unaware of the contents of Sappho's poetry, looks like a compliment.[46] However, on closer inspection, the treatment of Doricha in the epigram itself could be called scathing. Posidippus describes how all her physical charm (implied in the images of the hair-ribbon, the fragrant shawl, and the skin-to-skin contact with which she enticed Charaxus), on which her fame depended, has disappeared.

The *pointe* of the epigram is therefore that immortality can only be achieved by (becoming the subject of) poetry, no matter how powerful charm may be—and no matter what this poetry precisely states. Dead as she is, Doricha has therefore become doubly immortal: once in Sappho's poetry and now again in Posidippus' epigram.[47] This is a double-edged compliment: on the one hand, the mere fact that Sappho names Doricha could be seen as an honor. The mention of Doricha by Sappho in itself demonstrates the once considerable power of her charm; it was great enough to make Sappho seriously worry about the fate of her brother.[48] But Sappho also gave Doricha a negative reputation; now Posidippus refers back to Sappho's judgement and moreover proclaims Doricha's irrevocable death, the proof of the final ineffectiveness of her charms.

45 Ath. 13.69.1: διὰ τῆς ποιήσεως διαβάλλει ὡς πολλὰ τοῦ Χαράξου νοσφισαμένην. (She slanders [Doricha] in her poetry as having stolen a lot of Charaxus' possessions). This is confirmed by Sappho fr. 15b Voigt and by Hdt. 2.132, where Doricha is however called "Rhodopis."

46 Gabathuler (1937: 51–52) claims that the epigram was meant as a real and therefore honorary inscription for a monument in Naucratis, glossing over the negative tone of Sappho's writings on purpose, cf. also Gow and Page (1965: II, 498).

47 Ath. 13.69.15 claims Posidippus moreover devoted much attention to her in his lost *Aethiopia*, which may have been an elegiac or epic poem. This does not necessarily imply a positive evaluation.

48 As Rosenmeyer (1997: 132) suggests, the epigram may also play on the fact that Egypt, in particular Naucratis, was an important export-centre of papyri. Perhaps the ships sailing down the Nile in the final lines were therefore ships laden with papyrus, on which new editions of Sappho's poetry might appear, celebrating/reviling Doricha.

There is some irony in this immortality. We are reminded of the way in which Cyrnus is immortalized by Theognis in his elegies, or Helen and Paris in the Homeric epics.[49]

A complex variation on the theme of enduring remembrance in written poetry and the interplay between fame, memory, and material monuments is seen in Callimachus' *Aetia*, fr. 64 Pf. (*Selpulchrum Simonidis*), a fragment that alludes to the form and conventions of sepulchral epigrams.[50] As archaic poets repeatedly emphasize, monuments (grave markers, statues etc.) are prone to ruin through the workings of time, whereas poetry and fame are immortal. This thought is perhaps most famously expressed in Simonides' epitaph on the dead of Thermopylae:

τῶν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις θανόντων
    εὐκλεὴς μὲν ἁ τύχα, καλὸς δ' ὁ πότμος,
    βωμὸς δ' ὁ τάφος, πρὸ γόων δὲ μνᾶστις, ὁ δ' οἶτος
            ἔπαινος.
    ἐντάφιον δὲ τοιοῦτον οὔτ' εὐρὼς
    οὔθ' ὁ πανδαμάτωρ ἀμαυρώσει χρόνος ἀνδρῶν
            ἀγαθῶν.
    ὁ δὲ σηκὸς οἰκέταν εὐδοξίαν Ἑλλάδος εἵλετο.
μαρτυρεῖ δὲ Λεωνίδας ὁ Σπάρτας βασιλεύς,
    ἀρετᾶς μέγαν λελοιπὼς κόσμον ἀέναόν τε κλέος.
(fr. 4 Bergk = Diod. Sic. *Bibliotheca Historica*, 11.11.6)

Of those who perished at Thermopylae all glorious is the fortune, fair the doom; their grave's an altar, ceaseless memory's theirs instead of lamentation, and their fate is chant of praise. Such winding-sheet as this nor mould nor all-consuming time shall waste. This sepulcher of valiant men has taken the fair renown of Hellas for its inmate. And witness is Leonidas, once king of Sparta, who hath left behind a crown of valor mighty and undying fame. (Translation by C.H. Oldfather)

By a clever use of metaphor and comparison (the Lacedaemonians' grave becomes a heroic altar, their undecaying winding sheet is made of their fame) this epitaph addresses the opposition between the dead warriors' decaying grave and their undying renown. The phrase ὁ δὲ σηκὸς … (line 6) raises the question whether the epitaph was originally

[49] Theogn. 237–254: Cyrnus receives fame by being named in Theognis' poetry; yet, Theognis accuses him in the same poem of being unfaithful. This reputation will therefore constitute his immortal fame (or rather notoriety). Helen foresees that she and Paris will be subject of song for generations to come, because of the evil fate Zeus has given them (*Il.* 6.358).

[50] Cf. Harder (1998: 95–115).

inscribed on a monument, or whether the metaphor (fame as monument) is merely continued.

This tension of an epitaph claiming eternal fame, whereas the monument it was inscribed upon might perish, is what Callimachus addresses in the passage (fr. 64 Pf. *Selpulchrum Simonidis*). Here the dead poet Simonides laments the fact that his grave was razed to the ground and embedded into the fortifications of Sicilian Acragas by the impious general Phoenix. Ironically, Simonides is distinctly worried about the disappearance of his grave marker, whereas we would expect him, the poet who thought that fame outlived monuments, to be above such worries. The passage obviously plays on the epigrammatic convention of the "voice from the grave" ("This is the grave of X;" "I rest here, Y, son of Z") but takes this one step further. The voice of the deceased, which is usually embedded in an epigram on the grave itself,[51] now laments the *disappearance* of this grave.[52]

Οὐδ᾽ ἄ]ν τοι Καμάρινα τόσον κακὸν ὁκκόσον ἀ[ν]δρός
    κινη]θεὶς ὁσίου τύμβος ἐπικρεμάσαι·
καὶ γ]ὰ̣ρ̣ ἐμόν κοτε σῆμα, τό μοι πρὸ πόληος ἔχ[ευ]αν
    Ζῆν᾽] Ἀκραγαντῖνοι Ξείνι[ο]ν̣ ἁ̣ζόμενοι,
ἶφι κ]ατ᾽ οὖν ἤρειψεν ἀνὴρ κακός, εἴ τιν᾽ ἀκούει[ς
    Φοίνικ]α̣ πτόλιος σχέτλιον ἡγεμόνα·
πύργῳ̣] δ᾽ ἐγκατέλε̣ξ̣ε̣ν ἐμὴν λίθον οὐδὲ τὸ γράμμα
    ἠ̣δέσθη τὸ λέγον τόν [μ]ε Λεω̣πρέπεος
κεῖσθαι̣ Κήϊον ἄνδρα τὸν ἱερόν, ὃς τὰ περισσά
    καὶ] μνήμην πρῶτος ὃς ἐφρασάμην,
οὐδ᾽ ὑμέας, Πολύδευκες, ὑπέτρεσεν, οἵ με μελάθρου
    μέλλοντος πίπτειν ἐκτὸς ἔθεσθέ κοτε
δαιτυμόνων ἄπο μοῦνον, ὅτε Κραννώνιος αἰαῖ
    ὤλ̣ισθε̣ν μεγάλους οἶκος ἐπὶ Σκοπάδας.[53]

(fr. 64 Pf. *Selpulchrum Simonidis*)

Not even if you were to disturb Camarina would you incur such a grave danger as in disturbing the grave of a holy man.[54] For my own grave, which the Acragantines had erected to honor Zeus Xeinios, was once demolished

[51] Cf. e.g. *AP* 7.28 (Anacreon).

[52] For a similar paradox, cf. *AP* 7.479, the epitaph of the philosopher Heraclitus by Theodoridas of Samos. This forms an example of the self-conscious literariness of Hellenistic epigram by proclaiming the fact that it is a fictitious inscription: it has been so worn away as to become unreadable.

[53] For lines 10–14, cf. Cic. *De Or.* II 352, cf. Ch. 2.3.

[54] A reference to the proverb "Disturb not Camarina," cf. Pfeiffer (1949: *ad loc.*): the inhabitants of Camarina had received an oracle forbidding them to relocate the homonymous lake near their city; else, they would risk utter destruction. Presumably,

> with brute force by an evil man; you may have heard of Phoenix, the pitiless general of that city. He embedded my stone into the fortifications and ignored the inscription that says that I, the son of Leoprepes, a citizen of Ceos, lie here, a genius, and the first to invent the art of memory.[55] Nor did he fear you both, Polydeuces, who once, when the roof was about to collapse, made me go outside, the only one of the banquet's guests, when the Crannonian home, alas, collapsed on the great Scopadae.

The fragment employs the characteristic *topoi* of epitaphs, stating name and patronymic, place of origin and exceptional achievements (8–10). At the same time, this alerts the reader to a problem: the grave is gone and the poet who lay buried under it is dead, so how can he be speaking here, and from where does his voice emerge? The passage thus delivers a sophisticated paradoxical comment both on the power of poetry in general and on Simonides' opinions about the superior conserving power of poetry over material objects in particular.

To better appreciate the intricacies of this paradox, some more facts about Simonides need to be called to mind. In the first place, this poet was famous in antiquity for his epitaphs, encomia, and dirges on the (heroic) dead, by which he ensured their immortal κλέος (fame).[56] This incorruptability of κλέος that transcends its material markers is also the theme of a poem commonly attributed to Simonides, his commentary on an alleged epitaph of King Midas.

In this (anonymous) epitaph, a bronze statue makes the following claim:

> χαλκῆ παρθένος εἰμί, Μίδα δ'ἐπὶ σήματι κεῖμαι.
> ἔστ' ἄν ὕδωρ τε νάηι καὶ δένδρεα μακρὰ τεθήληι,
> ἠέλιός τ' ἀνιὼν λάμπηι λαμπρά τε σελήνη,
> [καὶ ποταμοί γε ῥέωσιν, ἀνακλύζηι δὲ θάλασσα,]
> αὐτοῦ τῆιδε μένουσα πολυκλαύτωι ἐπὶ τύμβωι
> ἀγγελέω παριοῦσι, Μίδας ὅτι τῆιδε τέθαπται. (Diog. Laert. 1.89–90)[57]

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in the rest of fr. 64, Simonides narrated how the removal of his tomb had similar or worse consequences for the Sicilian general Phoenix. This Phoenix is unknown, as is the attack that brought him to embed the tomb of Simonides in the walls of Acragas. Perhaps Φοίνιξ is a name based on a misunderstood reference to the Phoenicians, who repeatedly invaded Sicily, cf. D'Alessio (1996: 470).

[55] Cf. the intriguing fr. 4 (West): μνήμην δ' οὔτινά φημι Σιμωνίδηι ἰσοφαρίζειν, / ὀγδωκονταέτει παιδὶ Λεωπρέπεος. (I say that no one may rival Simonides, the eighty-year-old son of Leoprepes, in memory).

[56] Cf. e.g. Theoc. *Id.* 16, Ch. 2.3.

[57] Pl. *Phaedr.* 264d preserves a slightly different version.

> I am a bronze maiden and sit on Midas' grave. As long as water will flow and tall trees shall grow and the sun rise and shine, like the gleaming moon, [and rivers shall stream and the sea break at the shore,] I will remain here on this much-lamented tomb and announce to the passers-by that Midas lies buried here.

Simonides apparently considers the hubris in this claim unacceptable and he counters it, with a pun (μωροῦ φωτὸς ἅδε βουλά, "this is the thought of a foolish man") on the name of its alleged composer, one of the canonical seven sages, Cleobulus (lit. "of the famed counsel"):

> τίς κεν αἰνήσειε νόωι πίσυνος Λίνδου ναέταν Κλεόβουλον
> ἀενάοις ποταμοῖς ἄνθεσί τ' εἰαρινοῖς
> ἀελίου τε φλογὶ χρυσέας τε σελάνας
> καὶ θαλασσαίαισι δίνηις ἀντιθέντα μένος στάλας;
> ἅπαντα γάρ ἐστι θεῶν ἥσσω· λίθον δὲ
> καὶ βρότεοι παλάμαι θραύοντι· μωροῦ φωτὸς ἅδε βουλά. (*PMG* 581)
>
> Who in his right mind would praise that inhabitant of Lindus, Cleobulus, who set against the everstreaming rivers and the flowers of spring and the force of the sun and the golden moon and the eddies of the sea the force of stone? For everything must yield to the gods; and stone may even be broken by the hands of mortals. That is the thought of a foolish man.

Through his denial that monuments of stone may endure, the epigram implies that poetry lasts longer.[58] The claim of the bronze maiden was in all likelihood known to him only *as a poem*, whether written down or circulating in oral form; he himself probably never saw the actual grave of Midas (which would have been in Phrygia), complete with its bronze maiden; if such a grave of the legendary king actually ever existed, and, more to the point, still existed in the time of Simonides. If not, Simonides' poem becomes an ironic comment on the fact that the Midas epitaph was a paradox in the form he knew it: it claimed immortality for a monument that was not (or no longer) anywhere to be seen. Thus, it had already proven its own claim false and shown that poetry was more powerful than a material monument.

Presumably Callimachus was aware of Simonides' musings on the subject of the perishability of graves and monuments in general. The fact that he, in Alexandria, knew the texts that were originally meant as markers on graves, may have struck him as ironic, for instance *AP* 7. 249:

[58] Cf. Snell (1938: 175), Segal (1998: 134). Ford (2002: 105–107) refers to Fränkel (1975: 430) who is more cautious.

> Ὦ ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις, ὅτι τῇδε
> κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι.
>
> Stranger, report to the Spartans that we lie here, having obeyed their orders.

This epigram enacts the disconnecting of the actual message of the monument from its monumental context by asking the passerby to take the report with him, to the Spartans.

This kind of poems lie at the back of Callimachus' ironic response to Simonides' attack of the Midas-epitaph. Disconnectedness of an inscription from its original monument likewise forms the departing point for relating the story of how Simonides' own grave was demolished and how the physical monument for his existence thus ceased to exist, inscription and all. In an ironic way, Simonides' attack on the claim that physical monuments outlast everything is vindicated by Callimachus. At the same time, the paradoxical situation imagined also forms a tribute to the lasting fame of Simonides' poetry as such. Simonides' own fame outlives the physical monument that was intended to keep it alive. This enables him to speak in Callimachus' poetry about the disappearance of his own grave hundreds of years after his actual demise. The fame of the poet and his grave are not forever lost; they still exist in poetry, only, paradoxically, not Simonides' own.[59]

It is likely that Simonides' mention of his achievement in the field of *mnemotechnics* (line 10 of the Callimachean fr. 64) is of special significance in the context as well. Of course, *Mnemosyne*, Remembrance, was the mother of the Muses, and thus of poetry. And poetry is of course the art *par excellence* to store remembrances and preserve as well as spread fame, in pre-literal as well as fully literal societies. That Simonides' poetry, his poetic voice, may now be embedded in Callimachus' *Aetia*, just as his gravemarker was embedded in the walls of Acragas, is primarily thanks to the power of memory, of Cultural, Poetic memory that establishes and preserves poetic traditions and enables readers and poets over ages and vast gulfs of time to communicate and commemorate. Even if seemingly lost in the fabric of new literary constructions, and razed to ground by new literary fashions, they somehow remain embedded in Greek cultural consciousness, and speak in the poetry of later poets.

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[59] Cf. Call. *AP* 7.80 on the death Heraclitus and *AP* 7.46 (anonymous) on the grave of Euripides. Perhaps Callimachus knew that many epigrams were falsely ascribed to Simonides. If so, he may even have been delivering a subtle comment on this fact by "pretending to be Simonides" in his own poetry.

In this way, then, like the epigrams discussed in this section, this last example testifies to a strong awareness that the immortality of poets depended on their poetic legacy. This continued to speak long after death had silenced their mortal mouths, and could be revived by later poets who knew their works. Of course, as the Hellenistic poets were aware, this was possible because of the efforts of the founders of the great libraries of the age and the diligent librarians and scholars who worked in them, keeping the literary legacy alive and reviving it, as the text of the *Aetia* is here doing in a typically subtle Callimachean way.

1.5.2. *Biographical Readings*

The ancient *Vitae* of the Greek poets partly came into existence in the same period as the epigrams discussed above and are the fruit of the same scholarly preoccupations, and the same drive to preserve and appropriate the Cultural Memory of *Greek Paideia*. They often contain a great deal of information borrowed indirectly or directly from the ancient poets' own texts.[60] In the case of lyric poets, this transference of information from poems to biography is facilitated by the fact that they regularly used first-person verbal forms (lyric "I"), which made it attractive to equate the author and the speaker of a poem.[61] For instance, the poems of Archilochus and Hipponax were known for their biting scorn, vulgar language, and representation of repulsive subjects.[62] The result was that the aggressive character of these poets' poems was uncritically taken as a reflection of their personalities. Moreover, it was more or less taken for granted that every situation described in lyric poetry was autobiographical. Thus, some very clear-cut, if not to say caricatural, images of poets, who came to personify the genre they had practiced, emerge in epigram.

[60] See on this Bruns (1896), Momigliano (1971), Lefkowitz (1981).

[61] See on this process, and antiquity's failure to distinguish between author and persona Clay (1998: 9–40).

[62] On the way in which Archilochus' poetry influenced his own notoriety, see Ael. *VH* 10.13 citing Critias (= Crit. *test.* 88 B 44 DK): "No-one would have known that Archilochus was the impoverished son of a slave woman named Enipo, that he picked fights, slandered friend and foe, was an adulterer and, worst of all, threw away his shield to flee in battle, had he himself not told us so." Critias concludes: "οὐκ ἀγαθὸς ἄρα ἦν ὁ Ἀρχίλοχος μάρτυς ἑαυτῶι, τοιοῦτον κλέος ἀπολιπὼν καὶ τοιαύτην ἑαυτῶι φήμην." (So, Archilochus was not a good witness to his own character, leaving behind such fame and such a reputation for himself).

This can be seen for instance in the reception of the anecdotal tradition regarding Archilochus. Dioscorides imagines what the daughters of Lycambes, speaking from the grave after hanging themselves from shame over Archilochus' allegations about their unchaste behavior, might say to defend themselves:[63]

Οὐ μὰ τόδε φθιμένων σέβας ὅρκιον, αἵδε Λυκάμβεω,
  αἳ λάχομεν στυγερὴν κληδόνα, θυγατέρες,
οὔτε τι παρθενίην ᾐσχύναμεν οὔτε τοκῆας
  οὔτε Πάρον, νήσων αἰπυτάτην ἱερῶν·
ἀλλὰ καθ' ἡμετέρης γενεῆς ῥιγηλὸν ὄνειδος
  φήμην τε στυγερὴν ἔφλυσεν Ἀρχίλοχος.
Ἀρχίλοχον, μὰ θεοὺς καὶ δαίμονας, οὔτ' ἐν ἀγυιαῖς
  εἴδομεν οὔθ' Ἥρης ἐν μεγάλῳ τεμένει.
εἰ δ' ἦμεν μάχλοι καὶ ἀτάσθαλοι, οὐκ ἂν ἐκεῖνος
  ἤθελεν ἐξ ἡμέων γνήσια τέκνα τεκεῖν. (*AP* 7.351)

No, by the respectable oath of the dead, we, the daughters of Lycambes, who have received a hateful reputation, did not in the least shame our maidenhood, nor our parents, nor Paros, steepest of the holy islands. No, it was Archilochus who poured onto our family horrible slander and hateful shame. We did not meet Archilochus, by the gods and the divinities, in alleyways, or in the great precinct of Hera. For, if we were lascivious and foolish, he would not want to have lawful children with us.

Archilochus' poetry is here turned upon itself: his alleged wish to marry one of the girls is used as an argument against his own accusations. The girls point out that he would never have wanted to marry them if they had really been all he has made them out to be. Archilochus appears in the epigram as unreasonable, spiteful, and dangerous. Yet, one might say that the girls' denial of the allegations testifies to the power of his poetry. Even if untrue, the effect of his words apparently was such that it killed, since they speak from the grave, where they ended up after hanging themselves from shame.

An epigram attributed to Theocritus[64] has a different tone than the predominant appraisal of Archilochus' character as exemplified by the previous epigram:[65]

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[63] The best surviving witness to these allegations is the *Cologne Epode*, on which see e.g. West (1974), Van Sickle (1975: 125–165), Henderson (1976: 159–179), Slings (1987: 24–51) and, with an emphasis on the issue of the identity of the speaker, Slings (1990: 1–30).

[64] On the disputed attribution of these epigrams, see Rossi (2001). For convenience's sake, I call the writer of these epigrams Theocritus, although I believe that this is in all likelihood a misattribution based merely on the dialect.

[65] For a negative evaluation of his character, e.g. also Pi. *P.* 2, 100–101; Crit. *test.*

Ἀρχίλοχον καὶ στᾶθι καὶ εἴσιδε τὸν πάλαι ποιητάν
  τὸν τῶν ἰάμβων, οὗ τὸ μυρίον κλέος
διῆλθε κἠπὶ νύκτα καὶ ποτ' ἀῶ.
  ἦ ῥά νιν αἱ Μοῖσαι καὶ ὁ Δάλιος ἠγάπευν Ἀπόλλων,
ὡς ἐμμελής τ' ἐγένετο κἠπιδέξιος
  ἔπεά τε ποιεῖν πρὸς λύραν τ' ἀείδειν. (*AP* 7.664)

Stop and look at Archilochus, the ancient poet of the *Iambi*, whose immense fame went both to the east and unto the west. The Muses and Delian Apollo must certainly have loved him, if we consider how melodious and capable he was in composing poetry and singing to his lyre.

This is one of the few poetical testimonies in the tradition about Archilochus that does not explicitly mention his unpleasant character.[66] Various explanations for this anomaly have of course been suggested. Firstly, that this epigram could be an actual honorary inscription for a statue of Archilochus, perhaps related to same shrine as the Mnesiepes inscription of the Archilocheion of Paros.[67] That would naturally not be the place to mention unpleasant characteristics of the poet. However, this explanation is improbable for several internal and external reasons: there is no mention of ethnic or patronymic, nor of the location or dedicators; the dialect is Doric. Moreover, the epigram forms part of a small collection of similar epigrams ascribed to Theocritus, which is generally assumed to be entirely literary (on Anacreon, Hipponax, Epicharmus and the obscure epic poet Pisander).[68] So how may this entirely laudatory approach then be interpreted?

The last three lines state that Archilochus was loved by the Muses and Apollo and sang and played the lyre ably. At first this praise look may so bland and undistinguished as to fit practically any lyric poet. But in fact, it might constitute a rather pointed allusion to the oracles that Apollo at Delphi gave Archilochus' father regarding his son.[69] Apart

88 B 44 DK; *AP* 7.69–71, 7.674, 9.185, and Call. fr. 380 Pf. On the general appraisal of Archilochus and Hipponax in the Hellenistic age, see Degani (1973: 79–104), who, however, constructs some indefensible literary quarrels on the basis of positive and negative evaluations of these poets.

[66] Another candidate is Posidipp. AB 118 (*SH* 705), which calls Archilochus "the Parian Nightingale." The fragmentary state of this poem makes it impossible to ascertain whether the reference was wholly positive.

[67] See Clay (2004).

[68] Resp. *AP* 9.599, 13.3, 9.600, 9.598. Cf. Bing (1988b: 117–123), Rossi (2001: 329–330). On the general likeliness of "inscriptions" found in poetry-collections being anything other than literary, see Bing (2002: 38–66).

[69] Cf. Gerber (1999: 23), *test.* 3 and 18: "Ἀθάνατός σοι παῖς καὶ ἀοίδιμος, ὦ Τελεσί-

from the reference to the oracle, the remarkable meter, an *Archilochian* followed by an acatalectic and a catalectic iambic trimeter, is another hint to this effect. Moreover, the epithet ἐμμελής probably points to the fame Archilochus had gained as an innovator of music.[70] Clearly then, the author of the epigram knows a lot about Archilochus, but chooses not to tell all. He achieves to condense a great deal of entirely innocuous information about this not so innocent poet in a form that was easy to memorize. I suggest therefore that the bland, yet informed epigram may have served the purpose of teaching schoolchildren all they needed to know about Archilochus. If they memorized the epigram, they would even have been taught a characteristic metre of Archilochus' compositions. Archilochus seems entirely customized and sanitized for canonical, perhaps, as suggested, educational purposes. The fact that a statue is referred to (just as in all the other epigrams) might even suggest that a picture of the poet was provided.

A somewhat comparable process may be witnessed in Theocritus' epigram on Anacreon, which once more shows a much blander approach to its subject than the traditional approach, this time represented by the contemporary epigrammatist Leonidas.[71] Let us begin with a look at the epigrams by Leonidas, which both invite a passer-by to look at the same (imaginary?) statue of Anacreon:

Πρέσβυν Ανακρείοντα χύδαν σεσαλαγμένον οἴνωι
  θάεο †δινωτοῦ στρέπτον ὕπερθε λίθου†
ὡς ὁ γέρων λίχνοισιν ἐπ' ὄμμασιν ὑγρὰ δεδορκώς
  ἄχρι καὶ ἀστραγάλων ἕλκεται ἀμπεχόναν
δισσῶν δ' ἀρβυλίδων τὰν μὲν μίαν οἷα μεθυπλήξ
  ὤλεσεν ἐν δ' ἑτέραι ῥικνόν ἄραρε πόδα.
μέλπει δ' ἠὲ Βάθυλλον ἐφίμερον ἠὲ Μεγιστᾶν
  αἰωρῶν παλάμαι τὰν δυσέρωτα χέλυν·
ἀλλά πάτερ Διόνυσε, φύλασσέ μιν, οὐ γὰρ ἔοικεν
  ἐκ Βάκχου πίπτειν Βακχιακὸν θέραπα. (*Pl.* 306/GPXXXI)

Look at old Anacreon, shaken in a disorderly manner by wine, †in a distorted attitude on the rounded basis†,[72] (see) how the old man, with lascivious eyes casting languishing looks, wears his mantle trailing on his ankles. Of his two boots, he has lost one, wine-struck as he is, while in the other one his shriveled foot still sticks. He is singing of desirable Bathyllus

κλεις, ἔσται ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν …" (Your son, Telesicles, will be immortal and subject of song among men …).

[70] Cf. Rossi (2001: 327–328).

[71] As suggested by Bing (1988b: 117–123) and Rossi (2001: 180–183).

[72] On the difficulties of interpreting this phrase, cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*).

or of Megistes, strumming his lovelorn lyre with his hand. Come, Father Dionysus, take care of him, for it is not right that a servant of Bacchus should be felled by Bacchus.

Ἴδ' ὡς ὁ πρέσβυς ἐκ μέθας Ἀνακρέων
ὑπεσκέλισται καὶ τὸ λῶπος ἕλκεται
ἐσάχρι γυίων, τῶν δὲ βλαυτίων τὸ μέν
ὅμως φυλάσσει θἄτερον δ' ἀπώλεσεν.
μελίσδεται δὲ τὰν χέλυν διακρέκων
ἤτοι Βάθυλλον ἢ καλὸν Μεγιστέα.
φύλασσε Βάκχε, τὸν γέροντα μὴ πέσῃι. (*Pl.* 307/GPXC)

See how old Anacreon is tottering from the wine, and how his mantle is dragged down to his legs; of his shoes, although he still has one left, the other he has lost. While he strums his lyre he is singing of Bathyllus or of beautiful Megistes. Take care, Bacchus, that the old man doesn't fall.

The portrayal of Anacreon here is unflattering, an observation hat seems to be confirmed by the fact that Pl. 307/GP XC is written in *iambi*, the meter of invective and comic abuse. Two main characteristics of Anacreon's poetry, the symposiastic and the erotic, combine to form a grotesque picture; the Dionysiac mysteries[73] with which he was sometimes connected are ridiculed in the same breath. Scholars have repeatedly asked whether these descriptions fitted any actual representation of Anacreon in statuary. This question has so far been answered in the negative,[74] which implies that Leonidas tried to imagine how Anacreon might be most satisfactorily represented in statuary *on the basis of his well-known reputation*.[75] What outer characteristics would a man present who apparently wrote obsessively of love and symposia? The result is a caricature.[76]

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[73] Cf. Diosc. *AP* 7.31, with Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*) on this Dionysian connection.

[74] Cf. Rossi (2001: 180–183).

[75] Representation of Anacreon in poetry as well as statuary started not long after his death. Ar. *Thesm.* 160–163 represents him as effeminate, Pl. *Phaedr.* 235 ironically as an expert in love. Critias emphasizes Anacreon's love for sympotic revelry; he only mentions women as the objects of Anacreon's erotic poetry (B1 D–K). Contemporary vase painting (490–450 BCE) shows Anacreon as a *komastēs* dressed in sumptuous oriental gear, cf. Schefold (1965: fig. 1b; 2a; 3a). An exceptional statue on the Acropolis represents Anacreon in heroic nudity, a *komastes*, but demonstrating signs of moderation and restraint (Schefold: 1965, fig. 7). Zanker argues that Anacreon is deliberately made into a paragon of Pericles' political thought here (1995: 29–38), cf. Barbantani (1993: 48, n. 137), Rossi (2001: 102–106; 280–283).

[76] Cf. the anonymous epigram *AP* 7.28. Here Anacreon's only epithet is οἰνοπότης; the fact that he was a poet is not even mentioned.

This caricatural depiction of Anacreon, in turn, appears to be exactly what the following epigram by Theocritus sanitizes, again, perhaps for educational purposes.

Θᾶσαι τὸν ἀνδριάντα τοῦτον, ὦ ξένε,
  σπουδᾷ, καὶ λέγ' ἐπὴν ἐς οἶκον ἔνθῃς·
"Ἀνακρέοντος εἰκόν' εἶδον ἐν Τέῳ
  τῶν πρόσθ' εἴ τι περισσὸν ᾠδοποιῶν."
προσθεὶς δὲ χὤτι τοῖς νέοισιν ἅδετο,
  ἐρεῖς ἀτρεκέως ὅλον τὸν ἄνδρα. (*AP* 9.599)

Look at that statue, stranger, with attention and say when you get back home: "I saw a statue of Anacreon in Teos, the best if ever there was, of the singers of yore." If you add to this that he took delight in the young, you will accurately describe the whole man.

The epigram invites the passer-by to stop and look seriously (σπουδᾶι) at a statue, placed on Teos, Anacreon's birth-site. By indicating and emphasizing that what is described is a statue (ἀνδριάντα 1, εἰκόνα 3), the epigram prevents the illusion that the statue actually *is* the man represented, and puts the subject of the epigram firmly in the realm of the monumental.[77] No actual description of the statue ensues, but once more we might suggest that an image was provided at which the reader is explicit invited to "look seriously," i.e. with the intention of memorizing its distinctive traits. The pederastic interests of Anacreon are circumscribed in a remarkably innocuous way in the last two lines: "If you add to this that *he took delight in the young*, (τοῖς νέοισιν ἅδετο) you will accurately (ἀτρεκέως) describe the whole man." Bing remarks that Theocritus' learned readers would certainly have realized that the biographical allusion of the epigram, although representing an important aspect of the literary interests and themes of the poet, could not in any way be said to "describe the whole man in an accurate manner."[78] Rossi adds that in this way Theocritus attacks the limited manner of considering the famous poet in contemporary biographical writing.[79] Instead, I suggest that this epigram was not aimed at a learned reader, perhaps, but rather at the schoolboy, not yet ready for the more racy

[77] Cf Bing (1988b: 118). Note that an illusion of looking at the man himself was deliberately created in the Leonidean epigrams (cf. Πρέσβυν Ανακρείοντα/ὁ πρέσβυς Ἀνακρέων).

[78] Bing (1988b: 121).

[79] Rossi (2001: 284–285).

details about Anacreon's "delight in the young."[80] If he memorized the facts here told concerning Anacreon, he knew more than enough for the time being.

These epigrams thus perfectly illustrate the compartmentalization that is always part and parcel of canonization, and demonstrate that the taxonomic drive does not always do justice to the poetry it describes. One of the down-sides of becoming part of cultural memory is the customization it entails, which turns the sometimes wayward material of poetry into clichéd, readily recognizable, but reductive images of the poets.

1.6. *Conclusion*

The image of the poets of the past found in Hellenistic epigram suggests certain tendencies in the Hellenistic perception and hence representation of predecessors. The general tone of the epigrams confirms that poets of the past were held in high esteem, even if their idiosyncrasies sometimes lent themselves to caricature (Anacreon) or expressions that appear to hint at moral condemnation (Hipponax and Archilochus).

The emphatically material, written-down shape poetry often takes on in the Hellenistic age is nevertheless a phenomenon which visibly determines the way Hellenistic poets conceptualize poetic immortality. The old ideal of κλέος, fame in (oral) song is superseded by the feeling that it is specifically the *written* word that may time and again be brought to life. Dead poets continue to speak with their *ipsissima verba*, if these have been recorded and transmitted (cf. the *topos* of the speaking scroll, Ath. 13.696). Hellenistic poets even feel that, because of these recorded words, it is possible to engage in a literary dialogue with them (e.g. Dioscorides' *ethopoiia* of the daughters of Lycambes). The lack of a record of the authenticated speech of legendary poets, on the other hand, appears to give them a somewhat different, arguably more uncertain status, as in the case of Orpheus. Callimachus cleverly turns this whole idea of poetry as a medium for the preservation of fame on its head by making the dead Simonides lament the loss of his grave and hence epitaph—but he does so in a poetical work (viz. the *Aetia*).

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[80] Cf. also Theoc. *AP* 13.3, which qualifies the general caricature of Hipponax as a vicious character, to be feared even beyond death (as found in *AP* 7.408 and 7.536). In *AP* 13.3, Hipponax is only dangerous for people with a bad conscience.

The possibility of living on in one's writings is connected to the thought that the content of poetry is a reflection of the character and experiences of its dead authors. This provides the living with the possibility to know them, judge them, imagine what they might have said (*ethopoiia*) and distil their essence in caricature, the facile side of Cultural Memory. Indeed, this last practice seems to have gone quite far in producing sanitized images of not entirely innocuous poets for educational purposes (notably in some epigrams attributed to Theocritus). All in all, the way predecessors are dealt with in epigram reveals an awareness of the paradox that they are both dead and immortal. They are at the mercy of their readers, yet their texts hold their own and cannot be belied, even if they are customized. The poetic text emerges as supremely important: it is all that is ultimately left of a poet and his life; it is the substance making up Greek cultural memory.

CHAPTER TWO

COMING TO TERMS WITH POETIC MODELS

2.1. *Tradition and Originality*

On the surface, it looks like the most natural and traditional thing for Hellenistic poets to ground their poetic practice in that of their predecessors. For whenever Greek poets did not credit their ability to craft poetry to the Muses, Apollo or an inborn talent,[1] they attributed it to what they had learned from their poetic predecessors, as for instance the following fragment from Bacchylides' *Paeanes* illustrates.[2]

> Ἕτερος ἐξ ἑτέρου σοφὸς
> τό τε πάλαι τό τε νῦν.
> [Οὐδὲ γὰρ ῥᾶστον]
> ἀρρήτων ἐπέων πύλας
> ἐξευρεῖν. (*Paean.*, fr. 5 Maehler)

> One poet learns his wisdom from another,
> Thus it was and thus it still is,
> [For it is not at all easy to find]
> The gates to words that have never been spoken.

Indeed, it is generally acknowledged that *imitatio* and *aemulatio* characterize a large part of ancient literary production. In pre-Hellenistic Greek culture, the literary past was considered the standard against which one's own poetic production had to be measured. Ideas about poetic genre

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[1] Cf. e.g. *Od.* 22.347–348 (Phemius): αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἴμας / παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν. (I am self-taught and the god has planted all kinds of song-paths in my heart).

[2] Cf. Lanata (1963: 102) on *Paean.* fr. 5 Maehler. She furthermore follows Jebb (and the ancient scholiasts) in positing that it is humorously aimed at Pi. *O.* 2.86–88: σοφὸς ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ· / μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι / παγγλωσσίᾳ κόρακες ὣς ἄκραντα γαρυέτων Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον· (Wise is he who knows many things by nature, whereas learners who are boisterous and long-winded are like a pair of crows that cry in vain against the divine bird of Zeus. transl. Race). On the alleged quarrel between Pindar and Bacchylides, see Lefkowitz (1981). For the feeling that a poet may learn from another poet, cf. further e.g. Antiphon (P. Oxy. 3.414 coll. 3): καὶ ποιητής μοι δ[οκ]εῖ ἀπὸ ποι[ητοῦ ἀ]μείνων ἄν γενέσθαι … (and I think that a poet may become better by learning from another poet …) as cited by Lanata (1963: 217).

were influenced by the literal view of poetry as a tradition, a "handing down" of what constituted a fitting, beautiful, and worthwhile combination of meter and subject matter (τὸ πρέπον). This kind of reasoning may ultimately have been responsible for the development of (unwritten) generic codes.[3] Certain subject matter became associated with specific forms because "it had always been;" hexametric verse came to be coupled mainly with dignified, serious subjects and iambic verse mainly with comedy or invective and license. This view of poetry implied that tradition could and indeed should be used to justify individual poetic choices: the way things had been done frequently became the way they *had to be* done.[4]

Although the Hellenistic period is generally regarded as very different from all that went before especially as regards the way the literature of the past was treated, there is no indicaton that ideas regarding the intrinsic *value* of the literary past fundamentally changed in this era. Of course, this time of great cultural and political changes necessarily also saw changes in the field of poetry: old literary forms were infused with new elements, resulting in what might be called new "genres." It has been remarked that while in pre-Hellenistic times genre rules were not written down, but simply obeyed, in the Hellenistic era, they were written down, which permitted the poets to break them.[5] Kroll first observed this crossing-over of generic characteristics and named it the *Kreuzung der Gattungen*. His idea was basically that this phenomenon was born from a wish for originality *tout court*, an abhorrence from the stale practices of older poets, a striving for surprise effects. Recent criticism has nuanced this view and brought back into focus the fact that the changes in Hellenistic poetry in reality often find their origin in changed social circumstances of poetry rather than in a purely artistic desire for novelty for novelty's sake.[6]

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[3] Cf. Harvey (1955: 157–175), Rossi (1971: 69–94).

[4] Innovation also provided possible variations on established themes and forms, even if the post-romantic admiration of individual originality in poetic production was unknown to the ancient Greeks. The real exception to confirm the rule is Timotheus fr. 20 *PMG*: οὐκ ἀείδω τὰ παλαιά, / καινὰ γὰρ ἀμὰ κρείσσω· / νέος ὁ Ζεὺς βασιλεύει, / τὸ πάλαι δ' ἦν Κρόνος ἄρχων· ἀπίτω Μοῦσα παλαιά. (I do not sing of old things; for what is new is also better. Young Zeus is king, while in the old days Cronos was the ruler. Be gone, old Muse.) Indeed, his dithyramb (*Persae*) on recent political events was exceptional in his era (fifth cent. BCE).

[5] Rossi (1971: 69–94).

[6] See on the topic in particular Hunter (1996) and Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 1–17).

Despite the changes, then, the past did continue to possess authoritative and legimitizing functions; it remained eminently present, even if very different from the present. This is where tensions arose: how could Hellenistic poets establish continuity while responding to new circumstances, and creating new forms of poetry?

2.2. *Meeting Ancient Poets*

Ancient poets who could serve as models were, as the numerous epitaphs composed in their honor amply testify, long dead by the time of Alexandria's heyday. Although their legacy was to some extent accessible for scrutiny and discussion among the learned scholars of the museum, many factual questions about the ancient poets' works and lives remained that could only have been answered by the dead poets themselves. As has been demonstrated, in some epigrams this problem is solved by giving a voice to the deceased or his works (*ethopoiia*).

A comparable, if more complex, problem faced Hellenistic writers of innovative poetry based on ancient models, as has been amply discussed by Fantuzzi and Hunter in their monograph on the ways in which in Hellenistic poetry tradition and innovation are inextricably entangled.[7] Standing on the shoulders of giants, Hellenistic writers produced their new works by combining disparate generic elements into new forms. How did they imagine their predecessors would have judged these new appropriations of the traditional models? More importantly, how could they use the models to convince their contemporaries of the poetical validity of their practices? Often these two questions were combined in the programmatic passages of the age.

One fact that becomes very clear from many of the instances discussed below, is that the poetic tradition remained a contested subject. The fact that the Library and Museum, the work of the erudite philologists and cataloguers had opened up the tradition to the world may have been one factor that contributed to this phenomenon. Another undoubtedly was the competition inspired by the fact that apparently poetry and scholarship were important at court. The prestige of the scholar or poet as such in this way also became something more than a mere artistic gambit. Indeed, sometimes reading Hellenistic poetry can feel at bit like judging a contest of bids for authority in the field of Cultural Memory.

[7] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: esp. 1–42).

The handling and adaptation to one's own poetical purposes is incredibly often placed in the discourse of rivalry with contemporaries. Clearly, models were not simply there for the taking. Contemporaries, patrons and rivals needed to be persuaded by poets to accept their authority in imitating and emulating predecessors. Often, this plea for authority is encoded in poetry by an appeal to the dead poet's own authorization. But as we shall see, Hellenistic poets sometimes also implied a certain awareness that their use of the legacy in fact amounted to an uneasy appropriation.

What forms could such pleas for authority *in imitando* take? An age-old Greek tradition was to defer poetic authority to the gods of poetry. Basically, this is what Callimachus does, introducing Apollo and the Muses in the *Aetia* prologue to support his predilection for subtle, innovative poetry on a small scale.[8] To corroborate the same preference, however, as Fantuzzi and Hunter point out, in this fragment Callimachus also employs *human poets* as examples (Mimnermus and probably Philitas);[9] he does so to silence the "Telchines" who apparently claim that traditional poetry exists of long, resounding verses about heroes and kings. Callimachus states that he rather chooses a different model, namely the short and sweet elegies of Mimnermus and Philitas: they are part of the same renowned and revered Greek poetic tradition, so what are the Telchines complaining about? The joke seems to be that the *Aetia*, in the end, of course turns out to be exactly what the Telchines have asked for: a long poem in thousands of verses about (amongst others) kings and heroes. It thus fulfils both the requirements of the Telchines, and Callimachus' own standard of highly polished, episodic narrative elegy.

An interesting, even more complex and telling variant of this procedure seems to have been presented in *Iambus* 13 (fr. 203 Pf.), where Callimachus defends his iambic imitation of Hipponax against some unidentified detractors. In order to justify his poetic practice of *polyeideia*, "writing in many genres," i.e. in iambic verse as well as hexameter, elegy and lyric metres, he here adduces as a model the fifth century poet and prose writer Ion of Chios. This means he brings in one apparently authoritative literary model (Ion) to justify his choice to follow another one (Hipponax), and others besides.[10] Perhaps this is an ironic joke about

[8] *Aetia* fr. 1.21–28 Pf.; cf. Call. *H.* II, 105–113.

[9] Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 1–17). Cf. Pfeiffer (1949: *ad* fr. 1.8–9).

[10] The whole *Iambus* also seems to allude to Plato's dialogue *Ion*, where it is stated that

the necessity Hellenistic poets apparently felt to justify their every poetic choice with a reference to an authority from the poetic tradition. Even the following of one model, or of many, could now be justified with a reference to another one.

2.2.1. *Timon, Xenophanes and Pyrrho in Homer's Hades*

There are of course more ways to make a bid for authority and authentication than merely *naming* predecessors. One could also turn them into speaking characters in one's poetry. This entailed either a revival of the dead, or a *katabasis* into their domain. What do these metaphors imply about the poetical tradition they reference? Is the uneasiness that Hellenistic poets may have felt in appropriating tradition expressed in these passages where the dead are made to speak?

If a Greek writer or scholar wished to question a deceased poet in order to support his own views, books were really the only place to look for an answer. However, a playful alternative to this was found by Aristophanes in his *Ranae*. There, a *katabasis* to Hades is undertaken by Dionysus to enable a dialogue with and between the dead poets Aeschylus and Euripides in order to decide whose style should be favored in tragedy. With similar aims, the third-century BCE satirist and sceptic Timon of Phlius also appears to have described a *katabasis* in his *Silloi*, books 2 and 3.[11] He gave these books the form of an emphatically Homeric *Nekyia*,[12] in which Xenophanes, a philosopher-poet from the sixth century BCE, guided him through Hades and showed him the dead philosophers endlessly quarreling over useless and even detrimental "opinions" (δόξαι). Timon presumably chose Xenophanes as his guide through Hades for two reasons: Xenophanes also wrote a collection or poem entitled *Silloi* and his writings revealed a mindset akin to that of the later sceptic philosophers.[13]

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each poet can only practice one particular genre. Perhaps the question "who was it that stated that one poet can only practice one genre" is even an allusion to a discussion about the ascription of the *Ion*.

[11] Fr. 775 ff. *SH*. On Timon of Phlius and the *Silloi*, see further Diog. Laert. 9.111–112, *SH app. ad* fr. 775, Long (1978: 68–92), Bing (1988: 71), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 6).

[12] For the Homeric tone of the fragments, e.g. fr. 775 *SH*: ἕσπετε νῦν μοι ὅσοι πολυπράγμονές ἐστε σοφισταί ... (Tell me now, all ye troublemaking sophists ...) a clear reference to *Il.* 2.484. Whereas the Muses are omniscient, the sophists are merely πολυπράγμονες.

[13] Xenophanes did make some positive claims about the nature of the physical world in

The ultimate goal of Timon's journey through Hades was a meeting with his dead master, the sceptic philosopher Pyrrho (fourth-third century BCE). He is represented as the only one among the dead exempt from the plague of conflicting and useless opinions:[14]

> ἀλλ' οἷον τὸν ἄτυφον ἐγὼ ἴδον ἠδ' ἀδάμαστον
> πᾶσιν, ὅσοις δάμνανται ὁμῶς ἄφατοί τε φατοί τε,
> λαῶν ἔθνεα κοῦφα, βαρυνόμεν' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα
> ἐκ παθέων δόξης τε καὶ εἰκαίης νομοθήκης. (783 *SH*)
>
> But such as I saw him [sc. Pyrrho], not puffed up with arrogance and not oppressed by all those things by which the nameless and the famous are equally oppressed, the weightless tribes of men, weighed down on all sides by the sufferings of false opinion and useless legislation.

So in this text, which employs the format of a Homeric *Nekyia*, Timon wished to ratify the *sceptic* view of life held by his teacher (and presumably by himself). A crucial element in this setup that seems to have gone unnoticed until now is that, in itself, this whole idea is evidently an immensely ironic paradox.[15] To describe existence beyond death in Hades in Homeric language in order to endorse a sceptic view of life is extremely odd. The afterlife is a subject about which no sceptic could ever seriously claim to know anything. Xenophanes, moreover, was a critic of Homer's theology,[16] a believer in a mainly material reality,[17] and something of a sceptic *avant la lettre* with regard to metaphysical phenomena and the afterlife.[18] Casting him as the guide through a Homeric Hades is therefore, to put it mildly, an incongruous way of dealing with his opinions. However, this is done in a work called *Silloi*, a title pointedly shared with a work by this same Xenophanes. Moreover, it is clearly done with the aim of ridiculing all *non-sceptic* philosophy. The joke must be on the quarreling dead philosophers, then, not on Xenophanes.

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his Περὶ Φυσέως (frs. 19–34 DK), but he also states that mortals can obtain no knowledge about the gods (fr. 34 DK).

[14] Cf. fr. 782 *SH*: οὐκ ἂν δὴ Πύρρωνί γ' ἐρίσ⟨σ⟩ειεν βροτὸς ἄλλος. (No other mortal would quarrel with Pyrrho).

[15] A similar kind of irony can be found in the Callimachean epigram AP 7.520, on the assumption that the dead Timarchus referred to is the Alexandrian Cynic philosopher of that name, cf. Fantuzzi-Hunter (2004: 323–325).

[16] Cf. e.g. frs. DK 10, 11.

[17] Esp. *De Natura* frs. 27, 29, 33 DK.

[18] Esp. fr. 34 DK, on the impossibility of knowledge about the gods; but also *AP* 7.20, a dig at Pythagoras' belief in reincarnation.

The tensions in this text thus strangely undermine and strengthen its message simultaneously. The afterlife is not something Xenophanes, Timon, or his teacher Pyrrho acknowledged certainty about; yet Timon places himself in a position of superior knowledge by casting himself in the role of explorer of Hades. By putting the quarreling philosophers there, he playfully reveals the ridiculousness of their claims to know anything at all, including life and death. All of this is done in order to endorse the sceptic views of his teacher and mock all other philosophy. Thus, he subverts both the Homeric and the Xenophanic subtexts to authorize his own and his master's views. All in all, this presents a striking way of manipulating the literary tradition for one's own purposes.

2.2.2. *Hipponax in Callimachus'* Iambi *and Herondas'* Mimiambi

In what is probably the last poem in the collection of his *Iambi* (*Iambus* 13, fr. 203 Pf.), Callimachus represents himself as under attack from critics.[19] Apparently as a part of this criticism, an anonymous detractor has blamed Callimachus for having written his Ionian *scazontes* (limping meters) while not even having traveled to the Ionian city of Ephesus, where this meter originated (10–14). To this, Callimachus with characteristic self-confidence, taking up his critic's own formulation, replies:

> ἀ̣είδω
> οὔτ᾽ ⌞Ἔφεσο⌟ν ἐλ⌞θὼ⌟ν οὔτ̣᾽ ⌞Ἴω⌟σι συμμείξας,
> Ἔφεσον, ὅθεν περ̣ οἱ τὰ μέτρα μέλλοντες
> τὰ χωλὰ τίκτειν μὴ ἀμαθῶς ἐναύονται.
>
> I sing, neither going to Ephesus nor associating with the Ionians, to Ephesus, whence they intending to bring forth the limping meters (*scazontes*) are inspired if they are clever.

This implies that Callimachus feels confident he can write iambic verse without having to leave Alexandria. Indeed, as Acosta-Hughes notes, Callimachus "gives his critic's censure that he, the poet, has not traveled to sixth century Ephesus, as the reason, not why he *cannot* compose in this genre, but why he can." (emphasis mine)[20] The passage may thus be taken to illustrate Callimachus' opinion that the literary tradition, in order to

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[19] Cf. the diegesis (fr. 203Pf): Μοῦσαι καλαὶ κἄπολλον, οἷς ἐγὼ σπένδω. Ἐν τούτῳ πρὸς τοὺς καταμεμφομένους αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῇ πολυειδείᾳ ὧν γράφει ποιημάτων ἀπαντῶν φησιν ὅτι Ἴωνα μιμεῖται τὸν τραγικόν· ἀλλ᾽ οὐδὲ τὸν τέκτονά τις μέμφεται πολυειδῆ σκεύη τεκταινόμενον.

[20] Acosta Hughes (2001: 60).

keep a certain actuality or validity in the present day and age needs to be brought to Alexandria.

The passage also clearly refers back to *Iambus* 1 (fr. 191 Pf.), where Hipponax has risen from the dead, and visits Alexandria to learn the Alexandrian scholars a lesson in modesty, and admonish them to abstain from mutual envy.[21] It is revealing that Callimachus should choose to have his Hipponax return as a revenant, and in Alexandria at that.[22] Indeed, this practice seems both to recognize that the poets of tradition are dead (as the many epigrams on their imaginary tombs more soberly testify), and that their legacy—be it only momentarily and in a new and different context—may still be given a new breath of life. But Hipponax's return to life is not as simple as it seems. By making the old iambist scold the scholars around Parmenion's Sarapideum, while emerging scott-free himself, Callimachus sanctimoniously and knowingly adapts the traditions of the iambic mask[23] to his own sophisticated purposes. This raising of the dead, the intellectual exercise in imagining what Hipponax would say were he to come alive today in Callimachus' context, becomes a reflection not only on the traditions of iambic poetry, but also on the poetics

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[21] Cf. *diegesis* VI 6: Ὑποτίθεται φθιτὸν Ἱππώνακτα συγκαλοῦντα τοὺς φιλολόγους εἰς τὸ Παρμενίωνος καλούμενον Σαραπίδειον· ἥκουσι δ' αὐτοῖς κατ' εἴλας ἀπαγορεύει φθονεῖν ἀλλήλοις. (It features the dead Hipponax, who convenes the philologists to the so-called *Sarapideum* of Parmenion. When they appear in droves, he forbids them to envy each other). The whole poem is spoken in his voice; to emphasize his authority as "the real thing," he is made recognizable by means of idiosyncratic expressions, Ionic dialect, and the meter in which the *Iambus* is written (*scazontes*) On the characteristic way Hipponax expresses himself, see e.g. Clayman (1980: 55), Bing (1988: 65), Kerkhecker (1999: 19–21), Acosta-Hughes (2002: 21; 36–40).

[22] Cf. *AP* 7.405; 7.408; 7.536; 13.3. Acosta-Hughes (2001: 289): "In both cases, the displacement has obviated exact imitation. The poetic voice of *Iambus* 1 turns out to be not so much that of Hipponax as of Hipponactean verse in early third-century Alexandria." *AP* 7.405; 7.408; 7.536; 13.3.

[23] Cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 3.1418b28–33: εἰς δὲ τὸ ἦθος, ἐπειδὴ ἔνια περὶ αὑτοῦ λέγειν ἢ ἐπίφθονον ἢ μακρολογίαν ἢ ἀντιλογίαν ἔχει, καὶ περὶ ἄλλου ἢ λοιδορίαν ἢ ἀγροικίαν, ἕτερον χρὴ λέγοντα ποιεῖν (...) καὶ ὡς Ἀρχίλοχος ψέγει. ποιεῖ γὰρ τὸν πατέρα λέγοντα περὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς ἐν τῷ ἰάμβῳ "χρημάτων δ' ἄελπτον οὐθέν ἐστιν οὐδ' ἀπώμοτον," καὶ τὸν Χάρωνα τὸν τέκτονα ἐν τῷ ἰάμβῳ οὗ ἀρχὴ "οὔ μοι τὰ Γύγεω." (In regard to moral character, since sometimes, in speaking of ourselves, we render ourselves liable to envy, to the charge of prolixity, or contradiction, or, when speaking of another, we may be accused of abuse or boorishness, we must make another speak in our place (...) Archilochus uses the same device in censure; for in his iambics he introduces the father speaking as follows of his daughter: "There is nothing beyond expectation, nothing that can be sworn impossible" and the carpenter Charon in the iambic verse beginning: "I [care not for the wealth] of Gyges." transl. Freese).

of appropriation.[24] For only *Callimachus'* Hipponax would scold Callimachus' colleagues in such a sophisticated way for their quarrelling.[25] We are invited to ask *who* is doing the scolding and quarrelling, really, behind Hipponax's mask.[26] And we are meant to ask precisely this.[27]

In Herondas' *Mimiamb* 8, another metapoetic poem, Hipponax plays a different role in validating the new poet's adaptation of his works. Hipponax visits Herondas in his dreams, which presumably indicates the visionary truth of the encounter (cf. Callimachus' dream meeting with the Muses in *Aetia* fr. 3–4 Mass. discussed in the *Introduction*). The speaker, identifiable with Herondas' poetical persona, recounts this dream to one of his slaves, Annas:[28] he met with some hostile goatherds and an old man. Joining the goatherds in a game of ἀσκολιασμός (jumping on a greased wineskin filled with air), he emerged as the winner. The description of the game suggests a characterization of Herondas' own poetry with its mixture of violent slapstick and bawdy humor: π̣άντα δ' ἦν, Ἀνν[ᾶ,/εἰς ἓν γέλως τε κἀνίη[......]ε̣ντα (43–44: The whole scene, Annas, was a mixture of laughter and pain ...).[29] Moreover, competition with contemporary poets (cf. Ch. 4) is thematized in the *askoliasmos*-game.[30] Of itself, it may even be significant that Hipponax twice occurs as model-poet in two very different contemporary poets' works.

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[24] It is often claimed that Callimachus' *Iambi* are different from Hipponax': less personal invective, more moral exhortations, cf. e.g. Jung (1929: 24), Fraser (1972: I, 733–734), Kerkhecker (1999: 293–294), Acosta Hughes (2001: 21). Not so e.g. Clayman (1980: 58–59).

[25] According to Hipponax, the situation in scholarly Alexandria is so grave that anyone in his right mind is considered "crazy like Alcmeon" by the others (78–79), while nasty practices like plagiarism and backbiting abound (80–86) and violent and analphabetic charlatans threaten the true poet (87–91), who is poor to boot (92–93). This last phrase may refer to Callimachus himself, who often claims his poetry earns him nothing, cf. fr. 193 Pf., *AP* 12.150. For Callimachus' quarrelsomeness, see further *Aetia* fr. 1 Pf.; *Hymn* II (105–113); fr. 398 Pf., an answer to *AP* 9.63 (in praise of the *Lyde* of Antimachus) by Asclepiades, cf. the *Scholia Florentina* to *Aetia* fr. 1 Pf. These texts, as well as the quarrel between Apollonius and Callimachus are discussed in Ch. 4.

[26] Cf. Kerkhecker (1999: 34), Harder (2001: 415), Acosta-Hughes (2002: 59).

[27] As Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 11) point out, something similar happens in *Iambi* 2 (fr. 192 Pf.), 4 (fr. 194 Pf.) and 13 (fr. 203 Pf.).

[28] Another dream leading to a "poetic investiture" by the Muses, was described in Call. *Aetia* (fr. 2 Pf.), cf. Kambylis, (1965: 93–106); on speculation and scholarship on this dream, see Benedetto (1993).

[29] Cf. Hutchinson (1988: 237).

[30] The poem has often been read as a "masquerade," cf. Theoc. *Id.* 7 as read by Reitzenstein (1893). Knox reads it as a polemic against Call. *Iambi* (1985: 107–119). Other interpretations have identified the goatherds as bucolic poets (e.g. Theocritus) and the young man (Dionysus) as Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Without necessarily wanting to imply a direct connection or indeed competition between Callimachus and Herondas, this does illustrate that he was a contested model, which may indeed be one of the messages of this poem.

Afterwards, when Herondas' triumphs, the old man claims Herondas' prize, a goat, or at least half of it. The arbiter, a young man whom some critics identify with Dionysus, patron god of dramatic poetry,[31] tells them to divide the prize. Significantly, then, it is not the model Hipponax himself who judges the efforts of Herondas; that is left to an even higher authority, the god of drama. To support this god's judgement, however, Hipponax does validate Herondas' claims by aggressively demanding part of the prize. Since Herondas has imitated his poetry, this prize rightly falls to him too.

In the last lines of the poem, the allegorical interpretation of the dream, Herondas claims that his Hipponactic poetry will be attacked by critics but nevertheless bring him great fame. It seems that he is putting himself next to, or at least as second best after the model of Ionian iambic, Hipponax.

> τὰ μέλεα πολλοὶ κάρτα, τοὺς ἐ̣μοὺς μόχθους,
> τιλεῦσιν ἐν Μούσηισιν (...)
>
> ..]κλέος, ναὶ Μοῦσαν, ἤ μ' ἔπεα κ[
> .]εγ' ἐξ ἰάμβων, ἤ με δευτέρη γν[
> .]... μετ' Ἰππώνακτα τὸν παλαι[
> .. τ]ὰ κύλλ' ἀείδειν Ξουθίδηις †επιουσι†. (*Mim.* 8.71–72; 76–79)
>
> Many will tear hard at my songs, at which I have toiled, with the Muses. ... fame, by the Muse, my poetry ... either from the *Iambi*, or second ... after Hipponax of yore ... to sing the crooked verses †for the Ionians†.

This reverend juxtaposition raises the question why Hipponax is so aggressive towards someone who claims to follow him as a model. One proposed solution is to attribute his anger to the fact that Herondas has modified Hipponax' genre (*Iambi*) by mixing in dramatic elements (hence the name *Mimiambi*).[32] This would mean that Hipponax is angry because his example is not being followed in the right way by Herondas.

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[31] E.g. Hutchinson (1988: 237). The prize of a goat seems to point in this direction (cf. the peripatetic explanation of the word τραγῳδία) as does the jumping on the wineskin.

[32] So Miralles (1992: 111); Fountoulakis (2002: 301–319), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 5). Rosen reads the *askoliasmos* (on which see Latte, 1958), as a symbol for this dramatic ingredient incorporated into Herondas' *Mimiambi* (1992: 205–216). The presence of Dionysus as a judge and the award of the goat would point in the same direction.

If this is correct, the poem describes an attempt at appropriation of the literary past gone awry: Hipponax subverts the frame his follower Herondas tries to put him in by behaving aggressively towards him.

However, by his aggression, Hipponax is paradoxically also *validating* Herondas' claim: his anger is a positive sign, as he feels he is being cheated out of a prize that rightly falls to his own poetry. What greater compliment? To support this, it may be pointed out that the behavior of "Herondas" at the beginning of the poem closely resembles that of the old man in the dream (Hipponax).[33] In the dream, Hipponax threatens:

> ἔρρ' ἐκ προσώπου μή σε καίπ̣ερ ὢν πρέσβυς
> οὔληι κατ' ἰθὺ τῆι βατηρίηι κό[ψω. (*Mim.* 8.56–57)
>
> Get out of my sight, so I don't hit you hard with my cruel stick, old man though I be.[34]

"Herondas," on waking, had uttered a similar if differently worded threat towards one of his slaves:

> τ]ό̣ν̣θ̣ρυζε καὶ κνῶ, μέχρις εὖ παραστά[ς σοι
> τὸ] βρέγμα τῶι σκίπωνι μαλθακὸν θῶμα[ι. (*Mim.*8.8–9)
>
> Yes, go on sleeping and snoring until I stand over you and crush your forehead to a pulp with my stick.

This near-quotation illustrates how Hipponax' threat towards Herondas has taught him how to behave as a iambic poet (viz. aggressively). The fact that Hipponax and Herondas ultimately display the same behavior illustrates that Herondas qualifies as a real iambic poet in the vein of Hipponax. Verbal aggression and threats are the means through which Hipponax chooses to invest his imitator as a poet. His behavior should therefore not be interpreted as a condemnation of Herondas' poetry by Hipponax, but rather as an example which Herondas duly follows. This is similar to the way Callimachus employs Hipponax in his *Iambi*. Both poets introduce the poet of invective as abusive, but consider his insults an invitation to abuse others in their own poetry: the insults characterize and simultaneously generate the genre that is being continued and adapted.

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[33] Cf. Hutchinson (1988: 237, 239 n. 39).

[34] This last phrase is in fact a literal quotation from one of Hipponax' poems, Hipp. fr. 20 West: δοκ⟨έω⟩ν ἐκεῖνον τῆι βα{κ}τηρίηι κόψαι.

2.3. *Paradigmatic Poets: Theocritus 16*

Theocritus 16 also evokes past masters as models for new poetry but in a way that is not so "close and personal" as the previous examples. *Idyll* 16 is a poem full of Pindaric reminiscences[35] that was ostensibly written to obtain a commission for more poems from Hiero II, the future tyrant of Syracuse, Theocritus' city of origin. It presents a meditation upon the history and mechanisms of patronage poetry, implicitly offering Hiero II the same relationship with Theocritus that the celebrated tyrant of Syracuse, his namesake Hiero I, had enjoyed with the great poets of his own era, prominently among them of course Pindar.[36]

This same Pindar, the obvious if implicit model of the poem, disliked talking about material rewards for poetry and euphemized his aversion in terms like φιλία and χάρις (friendship, graceful reciprocity). His distaste for the coupling of money and poetry is famously illustrated by *Isthmian* 2, a relevant subtext for *Id.* 16:

Οἱ μὲν πάλαι, ὦ Θρασύβουλε,
  φῶτες, οἳ χρυσαμπύκων
ἐς δίφρον Μοισᾶν ἔβαι-
  νον κλυτᾷ φόρμιγγι συναντόμενοι,
ῥίμφα παιδείους ἐτόξευον μελιγάρυας ὕμνους,
ὅστις ἐὼν καλὸς εἶχεν Ἀφροδίτας
  εὐθρόνου μνάστειραν ἁδίσταν ὀπώραν.
ἁ Μοῖσα γὰρ οὐ φιλοκερδής
  πω τότ' ἦν οὐδ' ἐργάτις·
οὐδ' ἐπέρναντο γλυκεῖ-
  αι μελιφθόγγου ποτὶ Τερψιχόρας
ἀργυρωθεῖσαι πρόσωπα μαλθακόφωνοι ἀοιδαί.
νῦν δ' ἐφίητι [τὸ] τὠργείου φυλάξαι
  ῥῆμ' ἀλαθείας [...] ἄγχιστα βαῖνον,
"χρήματα χρήματ' ἀνήρ"
  ὃς φᾶ κτεάνων θ' ἅμα λειφθεὶς καὶ φίλων.
ἐσσὶ γὰρ ὦν σοφός. (*I.* 2.1–11)

The men of old, Thrasybulus, who used to mount the chariot of the golden-wreathed Muses, taking with them the glorious lyre, freely shot their honey-sounding hymns of love at any boy who was beautiful and had the sweetest bloom of late summer that woos fair-throned Aphrodite. For at

[35] Cf. Clapp (1913: 310–316), Gow (1952: II, introduction to *Id.* 16), Hunter (1996: 82–90).

[36] Hunter (1996: 82).

> that time the Muse was not yet greedy for gain, nor up for hire. Nor were sweet soft-voiced songs with their faces silvered over being sold, from the hand of honey-voiced Terpsichore. But now, she bids us heed the Argive adage, which comes closest ⟨. . .⟩ to truth: "Money, money makes the man," said he who lost his possessions and friends as well. But enough, for you are wise. (transl. Race)

The ancient *scholia* understood Pindar to be referring here to his predecessors, the lyric poets Alcaeus, Ibycus, and Anacreon, who wrote their love songs inspired by the grace of beautiful youths, without any consideration of monetary gain.[37] Pindar expresses regret that such a pure motivation has been replaced by a concern of profit, and the *scholia* inferred that Pindar blamed Simonides for this.[38]

To demonstrate a somewhat similar idea about poetry and its rewards, Theocritus uses three other poets in *Id.* 16: Simonides and Homer, whom he both names, and Pindar, to whom he merely alludes. In the first part of the poem (1–70), he implies that whereas poetry used to be a favor (in Homer's times), poets nowadays need to ask their patrons for a material reward (since Simonides invented the union of poetry and money).[39] In the second half (70–109), Homeric κλέος (fame in song) is combined with the Simonidean model of κλέος for money, and an ideal merging of these two attitudes is implicitly found in Pindar, who emerges as the ideal model for patronage poetry.[40]

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[37] Cf. *schol. vet.* Drachmann *ad I.* 2.1b. ταῦτα δὲ τείνει καὶ εἰς τοὺς περὶ Ἀλκαῖον καὶ Ἴβυκον καὶ Ἀνακρέοντα, καὶ εἴ τινες τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ δοκοῦσι περὶ τὰ παιδικὰ ἠσχολῆσθαι. (This refers to Alcaeus and Ibycus and Anacreon as well as others that may have occupied themselves with *paidika* before.) It may however be noted that strictly speaking these erotic poets were not Pindar's real predecessors in the field of epinicia. On the introduction of money as a means to commission poetry, see Von Reden (1995: 30–50).

[38] Cf. *schol. vet.* Drachmann *ad. I.* 2.9: νῦν, φησί, μισθοῦ συντάττουσι τοὺς ἐπινίκους, πρώτου Σιμωνίδου προκαταρξαμένου. οὐδ' ἐργάτις, ὅ ἐστιν αἰτοῦσα μισθὸν ἐφ' οἷς ἔπραττεν. ἔνθεν καὶ Καλλίμαχός φησιν "οὐ γὰρ ἐργάτιν τρέφω / τὴν Μοῦσαν, ὡς ὁ Κεῖος Ὑλίχου νέπους." λέγοι δ' ἂν πρὸς Σιμωνίδην ταῦτα, ὡς φιλάργυρον διασύρων τὸν ἄνδρα. (For nowadays, he [Pindar] says, they compose their epinician odes for money, since Simonides first started this practice. "No working [Muse]" that is, one who asks money for what she does. Hence Callimachus says: "For I do not feed a working Muse, like the man from Ceos, the grandson of Hylichus. (fr. 222 Pf.)" [Pindar] might be saying that about Simonides, blaming him for being miserly.)

[39] Tradition described Simonides as a miser and the inventor of paid-for poetry, cf. Bell (1978: 29–86), Gerber (1997: 246).

[40] Griffiths (1979: 32, quoting von Holzinger 1892: 194) points out the subtlety of not naming what is the central model for this poem.

In the first 70 lines, Theocritus addresses the world at large, especially misguided people who are unwilling to spend their money on poetry. He relates (5–13) how he sends out his "Graces" (personifications of his poems) only for them to return home *graceless* since they earn no reward (8–10: σκυζόμεναι: with long faces; πολλά με τωθάζοισαι: continually blaming me; ὀκνηραὶ: intimidated).[41] The implication is that the χάρις (charm) of poetry can only come into its own when appreciated and rewarded (χαρίζεσθαι). The most important characteristic of χάρις, then, is reciprocity. In this respect, χάρις resembles the working of κλέος, the other main theme of the poem.

Finally, the Graces return moodily to the box Theocritus keeps them in (10–12: ὀκνηραὶ δὲ πάλιν κενεᾶς ἐν πυθμένι χηλοῦ/ ψυχροῖς ἐν γονάτεσσι κάρη μίμνοντι βαλοῖσαι, / ἔνθ' αἰεί σφισιν ἕδρη, ἐπὴν ἄπρακτοι ἵκωνται). At the basis of this image is a famous anecdote about Simonides. When asked to write a song for χάρις (equivalent to Latin *gratis*), this poet apparently replied that he kept two boxes, one for χάρις and one for money. The one containing χάρις was always empty, when he opened it in case of need.[42] Theocritus has cleverly turned this *bon mot* around,[43] so the point becomes that χάρις (grace; his poems) without χάρις (thanks, reward, appreciation) is useless.

At this point (14), Theocritus begins to explain what has gone wrong in the present day. People are unaware that, given the human condition, κλέος is the single most important thing to obtain. They misunderstand the true meaning of κέρδος (profit), thinking that money, not generously spent but jealously guarded, is profitable:

> (…) οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄνδρες ἐπ' ἔργμασιν ὡς πάρος ἐσθλοῖς
> αἰνεῖσθαι σπεύδοντι, νενίκηνται δ' ὑπὸ κερδέων
> πᾶς δ' ὑπὸ κόλπου χεῖρας ἔχων πόθεν οἴσεται ἀθρεῖ
> ἄργυρον, οὐδέ κεν ἰὸν ἀποτρίψας τινὶ δοίη
> ἀλλ' εὐθὺς μυθεῖται· "ἀπωτέρω ἢ γόνυ κνάμα·
> αὐτῷ μοί τι γένοιτο." "θεοὶ τιμῶσιν ἀοιδούς."
> "τίς δέ κεν ἄλλου ἀκούσαι; ἅλις πάντεσσιν Ὅμηρος."
> "οὗτος ἀοιδῶν λῷστος, ὃς ἐξ ἐμεῦ οἴσεται οὐδέν."
> Δαιμόνιοι, τί δὲ κέρδος ὁ μυρίος ἔνδοθι χρυσός
> κείμενος; οὐχ ἅδε πλούτου φρονέουσιν ὄνασις, … (16.14–23)

[41] Merkelbach (1952: 312–327) suggests that the Graces reminded the ancient reader of bands of children going around the doors begging for sweetmeats. Hunter thinks they reminded him of the anecdotes told about Homer's life as a traveling bard (1996: 94).

[42] Cf. *T-scholien* 104 and Stob. 3.10.38.

[43] Hunter (1996: 100): in the anecdote χάρις is what the mean patron offers the poet, in *Id.* 16 the poet sends χαρίτες to mean patrons.

> No more, as before are men eager to win praise for glorious deeds, but are enslaved by gain; and each, his hand within his purse-fold, looks to see whence he may win money and will not rub the very rust from it to give another, straight answering rather: "the knee is closer than he shank; may somewhat befall me myself," or: "the gods reward the poets," and "who would listen to another? Homer is enough for all," "he is the best of poets who shall get naught of me." Fools, what gain is it, the gold that lies uncounted in your coffers? Herein is not, to thinking men, the profit of wealth ... (transl. Gow, adapted)

The miserly contemporaries are so impervious to poetry's true nature and function that they foolishly believe that poets need no money (19, 21)[44] and that Homer is enough for all (20).[45] Theocritus therefore explains in Pindaric manner how best to spend one's money (24–29):[46] spend some on yourself and some on the bards (ἀοιδῶν, 24), treat many of your kin and many others well, be pious towards the gods, be a good host, and, most of all, honor the holy priests of the Muses (Μοισάων δὲ μάλιστα τίειν ἱεροὺς ὑποφήτας, 29).[47]

What happens if one fails to spend money on poetry is then demonstrated: the lack of κλέος has the same effect as having been poor all your life. You should really spend some money on poetry! (30–33)[48] To illustrate this, Theocritus provides some examples from the past, a "history of poetry" as Frederick Griffiths calls it, which is determined by the fact that "the further Theocritus gazes into the past, the less he sees of poetry's historical context and the more he feels its essence" (1979: 31). The link between poetry and κλέος keeps being emphasized, while the

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[44] This refers to an anecdote about Simonides. One day the Scopadae refused to pay Simonides for a song composed in their honor because it paid to much attention to the Dioscuri, saying: "Let them pay the other half." Thereupon a mysterious young man called Simonides outside, and the banquet hall in which all had been seated collapsed. Simonides interpreted this as a sign that the Dioscuri had saved him and had so repaid him for his tribute to them (Cic. *De Or.* 2.352).

[45] This refers to an anecdote about Xenophanes complaining to Hiero (I) of Syracuse that he could not make a living for himself and his two slaves out of his poetry. Hiero answered: "Well, that Homer you despise so much is able to feed more than ten-thousand, even now that he's dead." (Plut. *Reg. Apophth.* 175c; the same anecdote is related with reference to Zenodotus and Ptolemy (apparently Soter) in Vitr. *De Arch.* Proem 7).

[46] The relevant subtext is Pi. *P.* 1.90–98, advising Hiero I not to economize, in order to gain a good reputation beyond death (cf. Hunter 1996: 86–87).

[47] On the Homeric *hapax* ὑποφήτης, see Ch. 8.

[48] Cf. Pi. *I.* 1.66–68: εἰ δέ τις ἔνδον νέμει πλοῦτον κρυφαῖον, / ἄλλοισι δ' ἐμπίπτων γελᾷ, ψυχὰν Ἀΐδᾳ τελέων / οὐ φράζεται δόξας ἄνευθεν. (But if a man keeps wealth hidden inside and attacks others with laughter, he does not consider that he is paying up his soul to Hades, devoid of fame).

relation between poetry and monetary rewards fades into insignificance in the far past, the age of the traveling bards and Homer (48–57). The message of this "history of poetry," is that Homer is not a valid example for modern poets (cf. 20: ἅλις πάντεσσιν Ὅμηρος). Poetry may not have changed intrinsically, but the times have. This is why Simonides (34–47) is emphatically named, the poet who enjoyed the questionable fame of being the first to establish a relationship between praise poetry and money. He was a "divine poet" (θεῖος ἀοιδὸς ὁ Κήιος 44, the epithet is usually reserved for Homer!) but had to live with the realities of his age: for money, he provided his patrons, the Scopadae and the Creondae, with an extremely valuable gift, κλέος (36–44). Hence, Simonides represents the model of the two seemingly incompatible sides of poetry: the unpleasant, base monetary aspect and the divine, eternal κλέος it provides.

After Simonides' example, Theocritus once more travels back further into the past, to the bards of the epic cycle (48–50).[49] They sang of the heroes of the Trojan War, such as the Lycian princes (48), the sons of Priam (49–50), and Cycnus (50). These princely heroes once again fall outside the Simonidean system of κλέος. They did not pay a singer to sing of them, but their deeds were exceptional. So, the fact that their names remain again serves solely to illustrate that κλέος is the best thing attainable for humans and that it depends entirely on singers.

Next comes a reference to Homer's *Odyssey* (51–57): Odysseus would have been forgotten, like Eumaeus the swineherd, Philoetius the cowherd, and old King Laertes, if it had not been for the songs of Homer (57). The simplicity of the majority of the characters selected (a swineherd, a cowherd and an old nobleman on a small island) and the reach of the fame they achieved seem at the furthest remove from each other and therefore provide the most striking example of the power of poetry.[50] In the lines that follow, Theocritus once more recapitulates the essence of all these examples (58–59): "From the Muse comes noble fame for humans, and the possessions of the dead are wasted by the living." Ergo, spend money on poets.

After this, he shifts to a different paradigm and enters the Pindaric realm, which is much less straightforward. The possession of wealth is

[49] The example of Cycnus is from the cyclic poems, cf. Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*).

[50] These examples may have been chosen on purpose to underline Theocritus' claims as a bucolic poet who would provide κλέος even to the humble themes he specialized in, cf. Gutzwiller (1983: 227).

here opposed not to fame beyond death, but to "appreciation and the affection of people" (τιμήν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων φιλότητα, 66). Monetary rewards and wealth are not mentioned anymore. Instead, great deeds are now recognized as vital for attaining fame. Any poet who will be received κεχαρισμένος (with warm welcome, 68) will be glad to sing of the Achilles- or Aias-like Hiero II (74), who will chase the Carthaginians and bring a reign of peace to Sicily (76–90, a brief reworking of Pi. *P.*1, in honor of Hiero I). The days of Homer almost seem to have returned, but with the genteel and graceful touch of Pindaric reciprocity. Song and κλέος will be Hiero's reward for the establishment of peace (90–103).

The ending of *Id.* 16 thus becomes a subtle *Umwertung aller Werte.* Κλέος is no longer dependent on money but on χάρις, in the triple sense of thanks due to Hiero for his great deeds, graceful reception (χαρίζεσθαι) of the poet, and glamorous charm (χάρις), which Theocritus' compositions will bestow on Hiero. Nor is κλέος any longer solely a possession with special value after death; it is enriched with χάρις (in all senses of the word) and therefore valuable during life. This is why the Muses, who traditionally guaranteed κλέος for ages to come (cf. 1–2:), are united in the end with the Graces, who provide the *human present* (cf. 4: ἄμμες δὲ βροτοὶ οἵδε, βροτοὺς βροτοὶ ἀείδωμεν) with charm and glamor (108–109: τί γὰρ Χαρίτων ἀγαπητόν / ἀνθρώποις ἀπάνευθεν). The final lines (103–109) are a close reworking of a Pindaric hymn to the Graces (*O.* 14, 3–9),[51] whereas the beginning (5–13) featured the Graces in the adaptation of a Simonidean anecdote. Poetry, no longer encumbered by financial concerns, is all heavenly χάρις at this point.

εἷς μὲν ἐγώ, πολλοὺς δὲ Διὸς φιλέοντι καὶ ἄλλους
θυγατέρες, τοῖς πᾶσι μέλοι Σικελὴν Ἀρέθοισαν
ὑμνεῖν σὺν λαοῖσι καὶ αἰχμητὴν Ἱέρωνα.
ὦ Ἐτεόκλειοι Χάριτες θεαί, ὦ Μινύειον
Ὀρχομενὸν φιλέοισαι ἀπεχθόμενόν ποτε Θήβαις,

[51] *O.* 14, 3–9: ὦ λιπαρᾶς ἀοίδιμοι βασίλειαι / Χάριτες Ἐρχομενοῦ, παλαιγόνων Μινυᾶν ἐπίσκοποι, / κλῦτ', ἐπεὶ εὔχομαι σὺν γὰρ ὑμῖν τά ⟨τε⟩ τερπνὰ καί/ τὰ γλυκέ' ἄνεται πάντα βροτοῖς, / εἰ σοφός, εἰ καλός, εἴ τις ἀγλαὸς ἀνήρ. / οὐδὲ γὰρ θεοὶ σεμνᾶν Χαρίτων ἄτερ / κοιρανέοντι χοροὺς / οὔτε δαῖτας ... (O Graces, much-sung queens of shining Orchomenos and guardians of the ancient Minyai, hear my prayer. For with your help all things pleasant and sweet come about for mortals, whether a man be wise, handsome, or illustrious. Yes, not even the gods arrange choruses or feasts without the august Graces ... transl. Race).

ἄκλητος μὲν ἔγωγε μένοιμί κεν, ἐς δὲ καλεύντων
θαρσήσας Μοίσαισι σὺν ἁμετέραισιν ἴοιμ' ἄν.
καλλείψω δ' οὐδ' ὔμμε· τί γὰρ Χαρίτων ἀγαπητόν
ἀνθρώποις ἀπάνευθεν; ἀεὶ Χαρίτεσσιν ἅμ' εἴην. (16.101–109)

I am but one, and the daughters of Zeus love many another beside; and may they all be fain to sing of Sicilian Arethusa with her warriors and the spearman Hiero. O Graces, goddesses whom Eteocles adored, O you that love Minyan Orchomenus hated by Thebes of old, when no man summons me, I will abide at home, but to the houses of them that call I will take heart and go, together with our Muses. Nor will I leave you behind, for without the Graces what has man desirable? With them may I ever dwell.
(transl. Gow)

These lines suggest that Theocritus has become one of the many singers beloved by the Muses, who will hymn the Homeric-Pindaric hero (αἰχμητὴν, spearswinger, 103)[52] Hiero, and Syracuse. The transformation is complete: κλέος and χάρις are united as they should be (107–108) and reciprocity (in the form of a reward for a poet who bestows κλέος) is elegantly reacknowledged as the *condicio sine qua non* of poetry (106–107). Poets need patrons as much as patrons need poets. The *Idyll* exquisitely illustrates how the reputations and works of poets of the old days can be exploited in an erudite and subtle way to propose, authorize, and justify a new paradigm for the interaction between Hellenistic poets and their (prospective) patrons.

2.4. *Biased Readings: Hermesianax'* Leontion

The discussion of *Id.* 16 has shown how the works and lives of poets of the past could be made to meet the needs of modern poets through an emphasis on (or the literal quotation of) certain characteristic elements of their poetry and items from the anecdotal tradition about their lives. By these means, they are customized for the new social context of the Hellenistic world, in this case the personal situation of Theocritus. Considering their function in this poem, it is to be expected that these examples do not grossly distort the reputation or the nature of the poetry of the model poets beyond recognition.

[52] The word is also used of Ptolemy Philadelphus in *Id.* 17.56. It is found both in Homer (*Il.* 3.178, describing Agamemnon) and in Pindar (*P.* 4.12, *N.* 5.7, describing Jason and the sons of Aiacus respectively). Theocritus implies that Hiero will have a model in the subjects of these poets, and specifically in the patrons of Pindar's poetry.

On the contrary, a complete distortion of literary and philosophical history can be found in Hermesianax' *Leontion* (fr. 7 Powell), in which all the poets and philosophers named are claimed to have written their works merely as "allegories" of or testimonies to their love affairs.[53] The whole exercise looks like an elaboration upon the theme "Love teaches one to be a poet,"[54] but it is unlikely that this was the reading of ancient poetry (or philosophy) that Hermesianax *seriously* proposed. To name but some of the more outrageous examples, according to Hermesianax, Homer really composed the *Odyssey* because he was hopelessly in love with Penelope (λεπτὴν ἧς Ἰθάκην ἐνετείνατο θεῖος Ὅμηρος / ᾠδῇσιν πινυτῆς εἵνεκα Πηνελόπης, Homer put tiny Ithaca in his songs because of trustworthy Penelope, 29–30) and Hesiod wrote his Γυναικῶν Κατάλογος (Ἠοῖαι) out of love for the girl Ehoia:[55]

Φημὶ δὲ καὶ Βοιωτὸν ἀποπρολιπόντα μέλαθρον
  Ἡσίοδον πάσης ἤρανον ἱστορίης
Ἀσκραίων ἐσικέσθαι ἐρῶνθ' Ἑλικωνίδα κώμην·
  ἔνθεν ὅ γ' Ἠοίην μνώμενος Ἀσκραΐκὴν
πόλλ' ἔπαθεν, πάσας δὲ λόγων ἀνεγράψατο βίβλους
  ὑμνῶν, ἐκ πρώτης παιδὸς ἀνερχόμενος.

(*Leontion*, fr. 7.22–26 Powell)

And I claim that Hesiod, too, the shepherd of all history, leaving behind his Boeotian homestead, came to the Heliconian village of the Ascraeans as a lover. And from that moment he suffered much in his wooing of Ascraean Ehoia and wrote all his books hymning her, ever starting over from that first girl.

These are statements no one could be expected to take seriously; rather they pose as clever and playful distortions serving to justify and authorize Hermesianax' choice to write erotic elegy. He positions himself in a long "tradition" of erotic poets of his own creation.[56]

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[53] Caspers (2006: 21–42) emphasizes the "allusive" nature of these allegories; the fragment often echoes the vocabulary of the poets mentioned, or alludes in other ways to their poetry.

[54] Cf. Nicias fr. 566 *SH*, allegedly in response to Theocritus *Id.* 11.

[55] The other couples are: Orpheus and Argiope, Musaeus and Antiope, Mimnermus and Nanno, Antimachus and Lyde, Alcaeus and Anacreon rivaling for the love of Sappho, Sophocles and Theoris, Euripides and a servant of Archelaos, Philoxenus and Galatea, Philitas and Bittis, Pythagoras and Theano, Socrates and Aspasia, Aristippus and Lais.

[56] Cf. Phanocles' Ἔρωτες ἢ Καλοί (fr. 1 Powell). The genre of (elegiac) catalogue poetry was popular in the third century, cf. the anonymous "tattoo-elegy" (Huys, 1991), *Arai* (Curses) by Moero, and *Ibis* by Callimachus, which provide catalogues of legendary examples for punishments and insults.

Hesiod's thematic catalogue-poem *Ehoiai*, which featured the loves of gods for mortal women, serves as the main model of the present catalogue of loves. The girl Ehoia, who, as Hermesianax implies, furnishes the title, addressee, and recurrent "apostrophe" of Hesiod's poem, likewise functions as a model for Leontion, the beloved addressee who lends her name to Hermesianax' own poem. The love of the gods for mortal women and the heroic offspring that resulted from these couplings are reflected by the desire of the poets for their beloveds and the poetry this generated.[57]

The idea that poetry is the allegorical expression of real experiences, as posited in the *Leontion*, is related to the biographical mode of reading, which deduces a poet's character and way of life from his poetry (cf. the epigrams in the previous chapter).[58] However, in Hermesianax' case, the presupposed relation between a poet's life and work is not a straightforward one. Hermesianax interprets the classics, searching for hidden clues from which he reconstructs the stories of numerous love affairs, as the example of Hesiod's love for "Ehoia" illustrates. In this aspect, his mode of reading is similar to (or perhaps a parody of) that of the allegorical interpreters of ancient epic, who strove to find the deeper truth *under* the words of the poets, their so-called ὑπόνοια.[59] The *Leontion* thus testifies to the belief that literature depicts reality through a distorted lens. Hence, it is implied that literature demands an informed (or biased?) reader to reveals its deeper meanings, such as, in this case, that all poets wrote out of love.[60]

In the process, Hermesianax is actually reversing this allegorical mode of reading: in order to understand the alleged facts in the *Leontion* ("all

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[57] For the idea of poetry as spiritual offspring, cf. Pl. *Symp.* 209c–d.

[58] The formula at the beginning "Οἵην μὲν" (cf. 85) reads like a reference to the *Megalai Ehoiai*. Some examples in the fragment conform to the logic that "name of the work = name of beloved" viz. *Nanno*, *Lyde*, *Bittis*. In others the explanation of the love affair is sought in well known anecdotes or legends about a poet or philosopher (e.g. Orpheus' love for Argiope), historical closeness (Alcaeus and Anacreon rivals for Sappho's love, Socrates in love with Aspasia, Aristippus in love with the famous courtesan Lais). In some cases, the explanation remains obscure (Euripides, Sophocles, Pythagoras).

[59] See on ancient allegory and its history in general Struck (2005) and (2005b: 147–166). Porter (1992: 67–115) discusses Crates of Malles' (third cent. BCE) allegorical exegesis of Homer. An earlier example is Metrodorus of Lampsacus (fifth cent. BCE) fr. 61,3 DK. His interest is the true meaning of Homer's gods. The Derveni papyrus exemplifies allegorical interpretation of Orphic hymn.

[60] Note the emphasis on *knowing* in the fragment, e.g. 49, 73, 75, cf. Caspers (2006: 24): only the educated reader could be expected to understand the subtle allusions in the apparently trivial stories.

poets wrote out of love"), the reader has to be aware of the *true* facts of Greek literary history, for instance, that "Ehoia" was not a girl, but the recurrent phrase opening a new passage in Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women*. Being able to recognize the many distorted allusions to the life and works of the poets of the past is essential in order to unravel the logic of Hermesianax' fictions (or the method to his madness). The *Leontion* thus demonstrates on two levels the idea that all literature, no matter how fantastic, is ultimately reducible to the true events that lie at the basis of its conception.[61] Explicitly (and playfully), it claims that love is at the basis of all great Greek poetry. Implicitly (and factually), it forces the reader to realize that all of these outrageous claims have their basis in deliberately misinterpreted facts: whereas it is true that Homer wrote about Ithaca and Penelope, it is presumably not true (nor was it generally believed) that he did so out of love for Penelope.

On another level, the fact that Hermesianax presents all great poets from the Greek tradition as erotic poets (albeit in disguise) evidently serves to justify his own choice of erotic elegy as a genre. In last instance, it may be asked if this biased and willful reading of Greek literature as one great erotic elegy intends to ridicule the process of choosing models to reflect the poet's own image or, as the case might be, distorting them somewhat to do so. Perhaps Hermesianax aimed to highlight the dangers of misinterpretation that can be incurred by literary appropriation through playful exaggeration of this principle.

2.5. *Poets to Avoid*

In a few cases, an ancient poet is advised against as a model. The most notable case in point seems to have been Homer. But, apart from the fact that some of the passages in which poets are apparently warned against the dangers of imitating him are not entirely undisputed, generations of scholars have misunderstood the reason for warning against *imitatio homerica*. They assumed that not only the imitation, but also the model was rejected, especially by Callimachus, which is clearly not the case. We have only to think of the epigram on the *Oechalias Halosis* (*AP* 7. 28) to understand that this cannot be true, as is nowadays widely recognized.

[61] A concept also found for instance in the contemporary Dionysius Scytobrachion's rationalized reading of the Argonautic quest, cf. Rusten (1982). Cf. Euhemerus and his rationalizing treatment of myth, explaining away from religion all that was supernatural.

So was *imitation* of Homer rejected, and if so, why? Let us cast a brief glance at the well-known passages relevant to this issue.

2.5.1. *Imitating Homer*

To begin with, the end of Callimachus' *Hymn II* has often been read as a deprecation of poets who follow Homer:

> ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ’ οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
> "οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ’ ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει."
> τὸν Φθόνον ὡπόλλων ποδί τ’ ἤλασεν ὧδέ τ’ ἔειπεν·
> "Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά
> λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ’ ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
> Δηοῖ δ’ οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
> ἀλλ’ ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
> πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον."
> χαῖρε, ἄναξ, ὁ δὲ Μῶμος, ἵν’ ὁ Φθόνος, ἔνθα νέοιτο.
>
> (*Hymn II*, 105–113)

> Envy whispered into Apollo's ear: "I don't like a poet who does not even sing as much as the sea." Apollo kicked Envy aside and said, "The Assyrian river rolls a massive stream, but it's mainly silt and garbage that it sweeps along. The bees bring water to Deo not from every source, but only where it bubbles up pure and undefiled from a holy spring, its very essence."
>
> (transl. Nisetich, adapted)

Frederick Williams here understands the (presumably deliberately) enigmatic and oracular reference to "the sea" as an allusion to Homer, explaining the passage as follows:

> Phthonos' complaint is that Callimachus does not emulate even the length of Homer's poems (...) Apollo, expressing of course Callimachus' own views, rejects the suggestion that poems which are merely lenghy are by that token "Homeric" (...) Callimachus' own goal is to emulate and recreate Homer in a more meaningful and original way than merely to reproduce slavishly the external dimensions of his epic.[62]
>
> (Williams, 1978: 85–89)

This (i.e., "to reproduce slavishly the external dimension of epic") is in turn often interpreted as a covert reference to the practices of Apollonius, whose lengthy and apparently "Homeric" *Argonautica* would be the

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[62] Williams is supported by Giangrande (1980: 57–67) and Asper (1997: 120–125). Full bibliography on the passage up to 1989: Lehnus (1989: 233–241). Williams' claim is disputed by Köhnken (1981: 411–422) and Cameron (1995: 404–407).

real target of Apollo's and hence Callimachus' mudslinging.[63] Nowadays, the general scholarly consensus is that this last inference is incorrect; indeed, as anyone can see, Apollonius' epic is not nearly as long as the Homeric epics, and misses all the possible "messy" characteristics that Apollo here ascribes to long, unwieldy epic narratives when produced by poets who are not up to the standard of Homer himself. Instead, the *Argonautica* shows extreme refinement in vocabulary and composition. If thoughtless Homeric imitation aiming merely at heroic *size* is indeed the aim of Apollo's warning, than Apollonius should by rights emerge scotfree.

Going further in their scepticism, Cameron and Köhnken even argue that there are no cogent reasons at all to believe that this passage contains an allusion to Homer. The metaphor of Homer as "the sea," is not attested before Hellenistic times, which would make Callimachus the first to use this oblique way of referring to him.[64] But then, as accomplished a poet as Callimachus may surely be credited with this kind of novelty. Perhaps more to the point are the remarks of Traill,[65] who wishes to limit the references in Apollo's oracular statement strictly to the immediate context of this particular poem, and tries to connect the typically Callimachean opposition between large and small here with the pseudo-Homeric example for the present hymn, viz. the *Homeric Hymn* to Apollo, which is indeed a rather lengthy poem, and quite visibly stitched together of separate parts.[66] The Callimachean hymn is much shorter and more coherent, that much is certain. So, whether actually

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[63] Cf. e.g. Kahane (1994: 121), with bibliographical references. Strootman (2010: 35–36) on the other hand proposes a novel interpretation: the Assyrian river (the Orontes rather than the Euphrates as is generally believed) is an implicit reference to the court of the Sassanids in Assyria and hence to poets who were working under their patronage. The remark of Apollo implies that they write ponderous and unrefined poetry. Ultimately, this constitutes an implied compliment to the literary taste of Callimachus' own patron, who appreciates small and refined poetry. This interpretation certainly provides an elegant explanation for the choice of the *Assyrian* river. Strootman does not need to bring in Homer to make his point.

[64] Köhnken (1981: 411–422) and Cameron (1995: 404–407), cf. Traill (1998: 215–222). For the frequent opposition of big and unrefined versus small and elegant in Callimachus (without specific references to Homer), see. Asper (1997: 135–153).

[65] (1998: 215–222).

[66] We do not know whether the Hellenistic scholars believed the Homeric Hymns to have been written by Homer. On the question whether this text was considered to be one or two hymns in the Hellenistic period, see Miller (1986). Callimachus can in any case be seen to have alluded specifically to the Pythian part in his first *Hymn to Apollo*, and to the Delian part in his fourth *Hymn*.

referring to Homer or not, Callimachus is at any rate warning against large, untidy compositions.

The next alleged reference to Homer and the dangers of imitating him is found in the *Aetia* prologue itself, where Apollo counsels against driving along the "broad way," a phrase understood as referring to epic poetry in the vein of Homer. The phrase in question is found in lines 25–28:

καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα
γούνασιν, Ἀ[πό]λλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος·
"……]… ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον
θρέψαι, τὴ]ν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην·
πρὸς δέ σε] καὶ τόδ' ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἅμαξαι
τὰ στείβειν, ἑτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ' ὁμά
δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶν μηδ' οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
ἀτρίπτο]υς, εἰ καὶ στεινοτέρην ἐλάσεις." (fr. 1. 21–28 Pf.)

For, the very first time I put a writing tablet on my knees, Apollo Lycius said to me: "[Remember, dear] poet, to [fatten] the victim for me as much as you can, but, my friend, to keep the Muse elegant. [And I'm telling you another thing]: take the roads that are not open to hackneys and do not drive your [chariot] in the ruts of others and not over the broad way, but on [untrodden] paths, even if that means driving along a narrower lane."

For this passage, a Pindaric subtext was found, namely in the (problematic) text of *Paean* 52h Snell-Maehler:[67] Ὁμήρου [δὲ μὴ τρι]πτὸν κατ' ἀμαξιτόν / ἰόντες, ἀ[λλ' ἀλ]λοτρίαις ἀν' ἵπποις (Not going through the worn wagon tracks of Homer, but drawn by another's horses.) At first glance, it would indeed seem that the near-quotation should be read as an indirect reference to Homer. Markus Asper has however pointed out that the supplement of the Pindaric *Paean* is far from secure.[68] It seems Snell and Maehler, in their search for a supplement, were influenced by the *supplement* of *Aetia* prologue 28 and thought they had found a precedent for Callimachus' anti-Homer polemics in Pindar. It is clear at any rate that the advice of Apollo at *Aetia* fr. 1.28 implies the same stance towards poetics as the god expresses at the end of *Hymn* II: a preference for small, delicate, and refined poetry rather than poetry on a grand scale, perhaps including but probably not strictly limited to Homeric imitation.

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[67] Asper (1997: 64–72) denies that the metaphor of the road points back to any one particular poetic text; it was widespread.

[68] Asper (1997: 66–69). The problems of the supplement are manifold: ἀμαξιτός is feminine and τριπτός is always of three endings; moreover the π of τριπ]τός in Pindar is far from certain.

Finally, it has often been argued that Theocritus was a supporter of these "Callimachean poetics" on the basis of "his" verdict on the followers of Homer (*Id.* 7.45–48). This interpretation implies that Theocritus understood Callimachus to refer to Homer in the passages discussed above. Secondly, it also presupposes that Theocritus agreed on this point with Callimachus (and that Callimachus is prior to Theocritus). Even if we are willing to grant the first inference, we must realize that the opinion at stake is expressed by the goatherd poet Lycidas, who speaks to the young aspiring poet Simichidas (often understood as an alter ego of Theocritus, but see Chapter 6) in *Id.* 7 as follows:

> ὥς μοι καὶ τέκτων μέγ' ἀπέχθεται ὅστις ἐρευνῇ
> ἶσον ὄρευς κορυφᾷ τελέσαι δόμον Ὠρομέδοντος,
> καὶ Μοισᾶν ὄρνιχες ὅσοι ποτὶ Χῖον ἀοιδόν
> ἀντία κοκκύζοντες ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι. (*Id.* 7.45–48)
>
> For much I hate the builder who seeks to raise his house as high as the peak of mount Oromedon, and much those cocks of the Muses who lose their toil with crowing against the bard of Chios. (transl. Gow)

Lycidas explicitly criticizes the mistaken idea that Homer's poetry could and should be imitated. The result of such *imitatio Homerica* is inevitably liable to uncomplimentary comparison with the original; in a sense, it is as ridiculous as a house that strives to be as high as a mountain. More to the point, however, is the fact that in the context of *Idyll* 7 Lycidas' interlocutor Simichidas, the young and aspiring poet, has just a moment ago *quasi* selfdeprecatingly expressed his conviction that he is "not yet" as good as Asclepiades and Philitas, two established great names of the early Hellenistic age (39–41).[69] What Lycidas is also implying, therefore, is: "be careful to whom you compare yourself." Depending on whether we believe Callimachus indeed to be fighting against Homeric imitators among his contemporaries, Lycidas may even be ironically referring to Callimachus' own poetic credo: "Since you know so well what the poetic fashion is, and compare yourself to Asclepiades and Philitas, let me show you that I am also aware of current poetical trends."[70]

To recapitulate, whether or not a warning against imitating Homer should be sought in Callimachus' poetry is perhaps less important than the idea that new poetry should be on a small scale and innovative and not follow the "well-trodden paths." This idea appears to be shared

[69] Cf. Segal (1974: 128–136) on the simulated modesty of Simichidas.
[70] More on this passage in Ch. 5.4.

by both Callimachus and Theocritus, as their common imagery of big (and ridiculous and unrefined) versus small (and modest and elegant) suggests. If Callimachus is indeed advising against imitations of Homer, it is presumably because Homer is so great; like Theocritus, he might fear the result of an imitation of Homer.

This fear is easy to comprehend. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the consensus about Homer's prime importance and greatness has been maintained throughout Greek history, even if occasional criticism may have been leveled at the historical truth of his poems. The fact remains that *Iliad* and *Odyssey* together formed the greatest and most central poems in the Greek language. To try and rival a classic so ingrained in Greek consciousness was not only a supreme sign of hubris, it was also completely ridiculous. It might be possible to study Homer in a philological context but not to imitate him, let alone hope to emulate him on his own terms. There is, however, one interesting exception to confirm this general rule: in one epigram the 300 (hexameter) verses of Erinna, a poet from the fourth century BC, are said to equal the whole of Homer. The example seems to suggest that comparison with Homer is only possible when the *comporanda* are so different as to have virtually nothing in common:

Λέσβιον Ἠρίννης τόδε κηρίον· εἰ δέ τι μικρόν,
  ἀλλ᾽ ὅλον ἐκ Μουσέων κιρνάμενον μέλιτι.
οἱ δὲ τριηκόσιοι ταύτης στίχοι ἶσοι Ὁμήρῳ,
  τῆς καὶ παρθενικῆς ἐννεακαιδεκέτευς·
ἣ καὶ ἐπ᾽ ἠλακάτῃ μητρὸς φόβῳ, ἣ καὶ ἐφ᾽ ἱστῷ
  ἑστήκει Μουσέων λάτρις ἐφαπτομένη.
Σαπφὼ δ᾽ Ἠρίννης ὅσσον μελέεσσιν ἀμείνων,
  Ἤριννα Σαπφοῦς τόσσον ἐν ἑξαμέτροις. (*AP* 9.190, anonymous)

This is the Lesbian honeycomb of Erinna; and if it be small, well, it is all put together from the honey of the Muses. Her three hundred verses equal Homer—and that for a girl of only nineteen years old. She, the servant of the Muses, stood bound to the spindle and the loom out of fear of her mother. And as much as Sappho surpasses Erinna in melic poetry, so much Erinna surpasses Sappho in hexameters.

Homer was the undoubted *non plus ultra* of Greek poetry; Erinna reputedly a girl of nineteen who had written 300 lines lamenting her dead childhood friend Baucis. The feminine, unassuming pathos of Erinna's poetry is here provocatively set off against the war-, tragedy- and and adventure-ridden, all-encompassing heroic poetry of Homer. Her few lines, the epigram claims, rival Homer for quality. The comparison is unlikely, and preference for the scanty lines Erinna left over the uni-

versally acknowledged founding text of Greek culture signifies both an extremely marginal taste and a deliberate provocation, in a way that goes nowhere near Callimachus' warnings against (possible) imitations of Homer.[71]

This appears to be implicitly admitted by the author because he also compares Erinna to Sappho, to whom she is much more similar (hence the epithet "Lesbian" qualifies Erinna's work). One element in the comparison to Sappho suggests a possible reason why the comparison with Homer was broached at all: both Homer and Erinna wrote hexameters. (Σαπφὼ δ' Ἠρίννης ὅσσον μελέεσσιν ἀμείνων, / Ἤριννα Σαπφοῦς τόσσον ἐν ἑξαμέτροις.) All other factors considered, the difference could not have been greater and hence the comparison more unexpected. Interestingly, then, Homer was so engrained in Greek Cultural Memory *as Homer*, that to imitate him was simply impossible. He might well serve the purpose of learned and obscure allusions with reference to scholarly interpretations of vocubulary and the like, but his monumental compositions should never be taken as invitations for imitation or emulation. It seems that Callimachus more or less implies that all Greek poetry after Homer should really seek to be elegant footnotes to Homer, or to fill in the small voids that were left by his nearly all encompassing compositions.

2.5.2. *Liking Antimachus*

The category of "predecessors not to be imitated" also contains poets nearer to the Hellenistic era, such as Antimachus of Colophon.[72] Apart from the question of his poetic merits (which are hard to evaluate, owing to the state of his works),[73] his proximity to Callimachus' own time and practice might have been reason for Callimachus to criticize Antimachus. Alan Cameron claims it may be that Callimachus regarded Antimachus as an imitator of Homer in the wrong mode; he was apparently prone to literal citation of Homer to an extent that is not found and perhaps therefore unacceptable in Hellenistic poetry. As has been demonstrated, Callimachus certainly did not reject Homer *per se* but may have loathed

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[71] For praise of Homer in Hellenistic epigram: *AP* 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.80, 9.24, on which see in particular Skiadas (1965).

[72] On Antimachus in general, see Wyss (1936) and Matthews (1996).

[73] Antimachus appears to have been a learned poet, writing in a mannered style, with preference for obscure words; characteristics he shares with some of the Hellenistic poets, e.g. Callimachus. On Callimachus' evaluation of Antimachus, see in particular Brink (1946: 11–26), Krevans (1993: 141–161), Cameron (1995: 301–309).

dull *imitatio Homerica* all the more. Moreover, since both poets wrote conspicuously learned *elegies* (the *Lyde* and the *Aetia*, respectively), there may have been another reason why Callimachus found so much fault with Antimachus. Perhaps he found that Antimachus' practice was close to his own, but in a manner which he could not appreciate.

On the other hand, it appears that Antimachus was not rejected wholesale by the Hellenistic poets (cf. Asclepiades *AP* 9.63, Posidippus *AP* 12.168).[74] In an earlier generation, he was apparently admired even by Plato.[75] In Asclepiades' epigram *AP* 9.63, the elegiac *Lyde*, Antimachus' most famous poem declares herself to possess undying fame, thanks to her author:

> Λύδη καὶ γένος εἰμὶ καὶ οὔνομα· τῶν δ' ἀπὸ Κόδρου
> σεμνοτέρη πασῶν εἰμι δι' Ἀντίμαχον.
> τίς γὰρ ἔμ' οὐκ ἤεισε; τίς οὐκ ἀνελέξατο Λύδην,
> τὸ ξυνὸν Μουσῶν γράμμα καὶ Ἀντιμάχου; (*AP* 9.63)

> Lyde am I, by descent and by name, and thanks to Antimachus I am more famed than all the female descendants of Codrus. For who has not sung of me? Who has not read the *Lyde*, the joint writing of Antimachus and the Muses?

Lyde, who had introduced herself in the first line as a woman, finally reveals herself for what she is: "the joint *writing* (γράμμα) of Antimachus and the Muses." She has become a lady of letters in the most literal sense. Interestingly, the poem also appears to contain a jibe at Callimachus, as Cameron points out, for the phrase "I am more famed than all the female descendants of Codrus" (1–2) may well have referred to Cydippe, the famous heroine of Callimachus *Aetia* fr. 75. This too suggests that the practice of Antimachus may have been uncomfortably close to Callimachus' own, even in the eyes of the latter's contemporaries. It thus forms an illustration of the thesis I will explore in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, that many of the programmatic texts in which a poet from an earlier generation is praised or imitated also include references, complimentary or deprecating, to contemporaries. This also demonstrates (cf. what I argue in Chapter 1. 4) how literature and poetry go through a fluid, contested phase before they are accepted (or not, as was the case with Antimachus) and turned into the customized, and generally agreed upon matter of canon, or cultural memory.

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[74] Posidippus names Antimachus in one breath with Mimnermus, whom Callimachus names as his model in *Aetia* fr. 1 Pf.

[75] Cf. Brink (1946: 11–26).

The clever *tournure* in Asclepiades' epigram, turning a woman into a book in the course of four verses, reflects what Antimachus has done with his love for Lyde in the course of the long process of writing his poetry. Callimachus reply to this epigram (fr. 398 Pf.) which, as we saw, may have deprecated his own elegiac efforts, seizes upon this last phrase.[76] His words cleverly parody the first line of Asclepiades: Λύδη καὶ παχὺ γράμμα καὶ οὐ τορόν (*Lyde*, a thick and inarticulate book). The fact that the book is immediately called (or calls itself, perhaps) a *book* (γράμμα) in Callimachus' fragment might express his opinion that it did not have and never had had any life in it. The scathing verdict that it is a piece of "thick/fat" (παχὺ) and "inarticulate" (οὐ τορόν) writing demonstrates that Callimachus regarded it as nothing more than a piece of faulty craftsmanship.[77] He consciously subverts the image conjured up by Asclepiades' praise that *Lyde* was "a living woman turned poetry."

Interestingly, where we saw that the authority to imitate certain models was contested, we now see that the authority to decide who of the older generation of poets is not to be imitated, or even admired is similarly contested. Antimachus is a case in point; a model whose merits were still subject of debate at the time of early Hellenism. He clearly had not entered the realms of Cultural Memory to such a degree that an uncontested opinion was formed about his intrinsic worth. Could and should he serve as a viable model for Hellenistic poetic practice, should he be admired, even? Callimachus thought this was not the case, while Asclepiades presumably did think so. Regrettably it is impossible to form an opinion of our own, since history has deprived us of a possibility to form a clear image of this intriguing poet. Homer and Antimachus thus stand at opposite ends of the spectrum of poets that cannot unreservedly be taken as models, Homer is too self-evident; Antimachus' virtues are not universally acknowledged.

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[76] On the controversy over Antimachus' *Lyde* and Callimachus' role in it, see e.g. Brink (1946: 11–46), Krevans (1993), Cameron (1995: 303–339), the revisionary reading of Stephens (2005: 229–236).

[77] Krevans (1993: 157–158) argues that the qualifications παχύς and οὐ τορός probably mean "verbose, florid" and "metrically rough." However, apart from these more technical-rhetorical meanings, they could also mean "fat/thick and inarticulate," so the personification intended by Asclepiades would be retained. See further Asper (1997: 160–189).

2.6. *Conclusion*

This chapter has exemplified and analyzed some of the manifold ways of dealing with the "cultural memory" of Greek poetry found in the works of Hellenistic poets, who imitate, emulate, and alter their models. A predecessor may be introduced to underscore the authority of a modern poet trying his hand at an old genre or creating a new one while basing it (and himself) on old examples. Together with the genre, he literally wishes to bring its originator back to life. At the same time, however, it is difficult to manage these poetic models because they are the voices of authority. They may even turn upon the speaker and reveal the way he has tried to use them for what it actually is: appropriation (cf. Callimachus and Herondas in their negotiation with the unrelenting Hipponax). It is less risky to choose a more indirect way of incorporating the models: not giving a predecessor his own voice but naming him and referring to well chosen anecdotes from his life instead. This is how Theocritus *Id.* 16 justifies his novel position of praising poet in the age of paid poetry. Alternatively, models could be mutilated and reshaped into a reflection of the modern poet himself, as Hermesianax does in order to construct a long and venerable tradition of erotic poetry inspired by a beloved (*Leontion* fr. 7 Powell). This is evidently not a serious way of authenticating a new genre; indeed its irony resides in the obvious falsity of its claims. Finally, there is the issue of predecessors better avoided as models. These may be either *hors concours*, like Homer, or contested because are not yet embedded in established tradition, like Antimachus. This does not mean they are unadmired or never imitated, but modeling poetry on them risks incurring the danger of opposing critics.

This demonstrates how for poets of the early Hellenistic era there were many ways of dealing with and regarding the past. However, one thing is clear: the past was always present, and poets had to come to terms with it. Scholarly interest and the wish to find a plausible model for poetry in changed circumstances inform the assimilations, critiques, and reflections upon the cultural heritage that was gathered and considered as such for the first time. But the competition between contemporaries also plays a defining part in the strategies of authority outlined in the passages where models are introduced. Ultimately, the dictum taken from Bacchylides' *paean*, "one poet learns from another," is still, or indeed, more than ever, valid in the Hellenistic period. The poets of the past taught the Hellenistic poets who they were and how and what they should write. But it was their contemporaries who could contest

or comply with their choices. Metaphorically speaking, the model-poets were the true Muses of the Hellenistic era; it was their cult that was celebrated in the Museum of Alexandria; but perhaps we could say that their priests, the competitive poets treading in their footsteps, were a quarrelsome lot. This issue will be explored in more detail in chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER THREE

APPROPRIATING MYTHICAL POETS

3.1. *Inventing Traditions*

As the previous chapter has argued, there are signs that (false) ascription of poetical ideas to poets of the historical era, whose works were still there to be read, was recognized as problematic in Hellenistic poetry. Models are not simply there for the taking; the polemical tone of many of the programmatic passages suggests that authority and authenticity did not always come easily and uncontested. It may now be asked how this issue was handled in the Hellenistic treatment of mythical poets, whose works were no longer extant, or at best of doubtful authenticity. Do the same tensions arise? Or are mythical poets more amenable, and less disputed as models? There are indeed differences in the way these poets are approached, as this chapter will show through a discussion of two poets and their way of handling this issue, Apollonius and Theocritus.

I will begin with the case of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, focusing on his portrayal of the mythical bard Orpheus. Orpheus' introduction at the top of the catalogue of Argonauts as the son of the Muse of epic, Calliope, has usually been interpreted as signifying that he is of paramount importance to the subsequent narrative.[1] The entry in the catalogue introducing him reads as follows:

Πρῶτά νυν Ὀρφῆος μνησώμεθα, τόν ῥά ποτ' αὐτὴ
Καλλιόπη Θρήικι φατίζεται εὐνηθεῖσα
Οἰάγρῳ σκοπιῆς Πιμπληίδος ἄγχι τεκέσθαι.
αὐτὰρ τόνγ' ἐνέπουσιν ἀτειρέας οὔρεσι πέτρας
θέλξαι ἀοιδάων ἐνοπῇ ποταμῶν τε ῥέεθρα·
φηγοὶ δ' ἀγριάδες κείνης ἔτι σήματα μολπῆς
ἀκτῇ Θρηικίῃ Ζώνης ἔπι τηλεθόωσαι
ἑξείης στιχόωσιν ἐπήτριμοι, ἃς ὅγ' ἐπιπρό

[1] Orpheus' position in the catalogue (1.23–34) and its implications have been remarked upon by practically everyone studying the *Argonautica* from antiquity (*scholia*) to modern times. For bibliography, see Scherer (2002: 115, n. 386), Cuypers (2005: 58).

> θελγομένας φόρμιγγι κατήγαγε Πιερίηθεν.
> Ὀρφέα μὲν δὴ τοῖον ἑῶν ἐπαρωγὸν ἀέθλων
> Αἰσονίδης Χείρωνος ἐφημοσύνῃσι πιθήσας
> δέξατο, Πιερίῃ Βιστωνίδι κοιρανέοντα. (*Arg.* 1.23–37)

> First then let us name Orpheus, whom, it is said, Calliope herself once bore near the peak of Pimpleia, after making love to Thracian Oeagrus. And he, they say, charmed the hard boulders on the mountains and the course of rivers with the sound of his songs. And the wild oak trees, signs still to this day of his singing, flourish on the Thracian shore of Zone where they stand in dense, orderly rows, the ones he led forth down from Pieria, charmed by his lyre. Such then was Orpheus, whom Jason, in obedience to Cheiron's behests welcomed as a helper in his trials, Orpheus, ruler of Bistonian Pieria. (transl. Race)

Although this passage clearly states (ἐνέπουσιν, 4) that Orpheus is miraculously able to enchant inanimate nature with his songs, he never performs a similar miracle in the ensuing epic.[2] So what *is* Orpheus' function in the narrative? Scholars have often speculated that for some reason Apollonius wanted to identify himself as narrator or poet with Orpheus: he should be regarded as an intra-textual alter ego of the poet. Alternatively, they see in Orpheus the representation of the ideal singer *tout court* not strictly identifiable with the poet; or as a "man of brain" (as opposed to a "man of brawn" like Heracles), or an Apollo-like figure bringing order and harmony (as opposed to the chthonic forces embodied by Medea),[3] explanations which clearly are not mutually exclusive.

Considering the emphasis on poetry and order in these interpretations, it becomes attractive to interpret the description of the bard Orpheus opening the Catalogue of Argonauts in book 1 on a meta-poetic level as metaphor for the compositional technique of Apollonius. The phrasing ἑξείης στιχόωσιν might allude to hexameter verse and it should

[2] Orpheus comes closest to truly miraculous enchantment in 1.678–679: the peaceful (enchanted?) fishes swimming in the wake of Argo. The character of this scene is discussed by Levin (1971: 220), Vian (1974: 77), Zanker (1987: 68), Clare (2002: 235). Another ambiguous scene is 2.159–163, on which see *schol. ad* 2.162–163, Cuypers (1997: *ad* 2.162–163), Clare (2002: 237–238).

[3] Identification with narrator: Fränkel (1968 *ad* 1.23), Hunter (1993: 120–121), Cuypers (2004: 58); ideal singer: Busch (1993: 301–324); man of brain: Lawall (1966); Apollo-related, bringer of harmony and order: Clare (2002, *passim*). Scholarly attention has further focused on the cosmogony in 1.494–511 and its philosophical, theological and literary sources, especially Nelis (1992: 153–170). See Scherer (2002: 115 n. 387) for further bibliography on Orpheus in the *Argonautica*.

be recalled that the Greek technical rhetorical term for poetic material was ὕλη, which seems in turn hinted at by the orderly rows of oak-trees. Clearly, Orpheus here functions as a metaphor for the poet's or (narrator's) ordering of traditional stories (cf. ἐνέπουσιν) to establish a unified, orderly narrative about the Argonauts, "proof" of which is then provided by the (still visible) traces left in Argo's wake, the many *aetia* related throughout Apollonius' narrative, which allegedly endorse his reconstructed version of events. Just so, Orpheus leaves his marks on the landscape by his songs, establishing an order with lasting results: the trees he has charmed with his song remain to this day (note the "omnitemporal" present στιχόωσιν) as signs of his singing. A particularly revealing, and often cited example of the narrator's ordering activities may be found in 4.552–556, where, before embarking on the most Odyssean stretch of the Argo's journey, the poet asks the Muses how it is possible that traces of the Argo are to be seen beyond the Adriatic Sea and Italy. This gives the impression that, though the traces and traditions in this region were theoretically part of the Argonautic tradition, the narrator wonders (or wishes to make his readers wonder) how he is going to fit them into his version of the story. So the perplexity of scholars as to the discrepancy between Orpheus' portrayal in the catalogue and his function in the rest of the story may perhaps be resolved in this way.

Nevertheless, the question then follows which of Orpheus' characteristics are highlighted in the rest of Apollonius' epic, and what they can tell us about Apollonius' own poetic persona. This is what will be discussed below. The case of Orpheus and Apollonius is not unique either. The second part of this chapter will demonstrate that Theocritus too uses mythical bards (Daphnis and Comatas) to reflect on and legitimize his poetical choices. It is my contention that a similar background informs the choices of both poets for mythic singers. A brief glance at the position mythical poets took in Greek culture and in particular Hellenism will illuminate this.

3.2. *Mythical Poets*

Cicero was certain there had been poets before Homer. He gives the following reason for this assumption:

> *Nihil est enim simul et inventum et perfectum; nec dubitari debet quin fuerint ante Homerum poetae, quod ex eis carminibus intellegi potest, quae apud illum et in Phaeacum et in procorum epulis canuntur.* (*Brutus*, 71)

> For nothing is at the same time invented as it is perfected, and we need not doubt that there were poets before Homer, as can be gathered from those lays in his works which are sung at the banquets of the Phaeaceans and the suitors.

Broadly speaking, this seems also to have been the Greek point of view:[4] the Greeks told stories about genealogies or miraculous deeds of numerous pre-Homeric bards such as Orpheus, Thamyris, Musaeus and Linus. The status of these pre-historic, mythical poets' "works" was (and in Orpheus' case remains) complicated. Throughout antiquity, they occupied a very different position than works ascribed to Hesiod and Homer, who were generally believed to have been historical personages and were seen as authors of a fixed corpus. The character and social function of works of historical and legendary poets also differed. Whereas Homer and Hesiod had produced canonical works of literature that were widely available and kept being performed at public festivals, the so-called Orphic writings[5] "aspire to be more than poetry: an esoteric knowledge, revelation rather than literature."[6] Consequently, their place was at mystic rites in a select company of initiates rather than at public festivities, and they were not used as educational texts in schools, unlike Homer's and Hesiod's works.

The mythic or legendary status of poets such as Orpheus, Linus, and Musaeus influenced the approach to their supposed works. False attributions to Orpheus and Musaeus were for instance already taken for granted by Plato and Aristotle.[7] Such deliberate misattributions were

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[4] Cf. e.g. Arist. *Po.* 1448b28–30: τῶν μὲν οὖν πρὸ Ὁμήρου οὐδενὸς ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν τοιοῦτον ποίημα, εἰκὸς δὲ εἶναι πολλούς, ἀπὸ δὲ Ὁμήρου ἀρξαμένοις ἔστιν. (We cannot name a similar poem of anyone before Homer, although it is likely that there were many, yet we must start with Homer …).

[5] The term is used widely here. *De facto*, there is little difference between writings attributed to Orpheus and Musaeus, except that Orpheus was more popular, cf. West (1983: 39).

[6] Burkert (1985: 296).

[7] Pl. *Resp.* 364e2–365a3, cf. Arist. fr. 7 Rose (1, 5.1410b 28): "ἐν τοῖς Ὀρφικοῖς καλουμένοις ἔπεσι" (fr. F 3a sup.): "λεγομένοις" εἶπεν ἐπειδὴ μὴ δοκεῖ Ὀρφέως εἶναι τὰ ἔπη, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς περὶ φιλοσοφίας λέγει· αὐτοῦ μὲν γάρ εἰσι τὰ δόγματα, ταῦτα δέ φησιν Ὀνομάκριτον ἐν ἔπεσι κατατεῖναι. ("In the so-called Orphic poems …" He says "so-called" because he does not believe that the poems are by Orpheus, as he says himself in his *On Philosophy*; for the teachings are Orphic, but these things, he says, have been versified by Onomacritus). Cf. Cic. *De Nat. Deor.* 1.38: *Orpheum poetam docet Aristoteles numquam fuisse et hoc Orphicum carmen Pythagorei ferunt cuiusdam fuisse Cercopis.* On the identity of early forgers of Orphic texts and their motives, cf. West (1983: 15).

meant to endow new poems with an air of venerable antiquity and/or revelatory authority; this practice can be traced as far back as the sixth century BCE.[8] In addition, as mythical poets could easily and safely be credited with controversial poetic ideas, they were ideal figures to be cast as *prōtoi heuretai*:[9] there was no *written* proof to the contrary, a fact that lent them a kind of protean quality.[10] The era and profession of the legendary bards moreover traditionally implied to later Greeks that they were related more closely to the gods than contemporary humans were,[11] as they were supposed to have lived in the heroic age. Moreover, being poets, they were in any case thought to enjoy privileged relationships with the gods.[12] Orpheus, for example, was usually called the son of the Muse Calliope or Polyhymnia and/or of the god of poetry, Apollo.[13] Poets who were so close to the gods and to the origins of poetry might naturally be considered endowed with great authority in poetical as well as religious matters.[14]

The absence of a clearly established written legacy and a venerable position in matters concerning poetry made mythical bards into ideal objects for interpretation, projection, and appropriation by later poets. Focusing on Apollonius and Theocritus, I will argue that these Hellenistic poets sought to establish their poetic authority by taking recourse to such mythical poets. This may be explained as an example of what social historian Eric Hobsbawm has called "the invention of tradition:"

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8 West (1983: 5).

9 On the concept of the *prōtos heuretēs*, see Kleingünther (1933), cf. *DNP s.v.*: "*Ihre* heurēmata *sind von Beginn an ausgereift, so daß Erfinder nicht nur die 'ersten,' sondern gleichzeitig die 'besten' sind.*" Gutzwiller (1991: 4): "Origin implies the source, the first time that establishes the pattern for all time, the authorizing event and so the authority ... The appeal of origins is (...) that of value; the first is inherently the best, because it sets the standard by which the thing begun is measured ever after."

10 The (false) ascription of poetical innovations to a venerable forebear was more of a problem in the case of poets of the historical era, whose works were still there to be read, cf. Ch. 2 *passim*.

11 Kleingünther (1933: 26), Sperduti (1950: 209 *et passim*). For the Hellenistic idea that former generations held direct converse with the gods, cf. Arat. *Phaen.* 100–136, based on Hesiod's myth of the races.

12 According to tradition, many of them had bonds of direct kinship with the gods, cf. Pl. *Resp.* 366b1: οἱ θεῶν παῖδες ποιηταί (poets are the children of the gods).

13 See Kern ([1922]1972) test. 22–23.

14 E.g. Sperduti (1950: 209–240); for the idea that music and poetry were originally creations of the gods themselves, see esp. 210–213. E.g. Pi. fr. 31 Snell-Maehler: Zeus created the Muses and Apollo especially to praise the cosmos in words and music; *H.H.* 4.420–423 describes the invention of the lyre by Hermes; Pi. *P.* 12.6 ff. describes the invention of the flute by Athena.

> The peculiarity of invented traditions is that the continuity with [the past] is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations, which take their form of reference to old situations. (...) There is probably no time and place with which historians are concerned that has not seen the "invention" of tradition in this sense. However, we should expect it to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which the old traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible or are otherwise eliminated; in short, when there are sufficiently large and rapid changes ...
>
> (Hobsbawm, 1983: 1–4)

It is generally acknowledged that the early Hellenistic era was indeed a period of rapid societal transformation,[15] which may explain why so many instances of invented tradition are found in this era, in literature, religion and court ritual amongst others.[16] The main use, to which invented traditions are put, according to Hobsbawm, is "the establishing or legitimizing of institutions, status, or relations of authority" (1983: 7). Applied to the selection of mythical poets as alter egos or forebears of a particular genre, the process is put to use by the Hellenistic poets to establish and legitimize their authority *as poets* in the venerable continuum of Greek poetical culture.

As we saw in the previous chapters there are two recurrent strains that configure the way Hellenistic poets try to position themselves as poets: their view of the past and their relation *vis à vis* their contemporaries. The past, the cultural memory of Greece, its traditions in the field of poetry and religion, form the battlefield where the competition for poetic authority and authenticity is waged: models are contested, debated, or even disavowed. The choice of a model is note merely a statement with regard to tradition, but arguably also a claim with regard to the tastes of contemporaries. As we also saw, there is a paradox in the experiencing of the past which makes the recent past less interesting and therefore less authoritative than the distant past, the time of origins. The floating gap causes each generation to look back over the recent past, back to mythic

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[15] Cf. e.g. Fraser (1972: I, introduction), Bing (1988), Hunter (1996: 1–3), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: viii; 17–26).

[16] Cf. the remarkable popularity of aetiology in Hellenistic poetry, which illustrates how the search for (fictitious/factitious) origins to ground contemporary usage (some no doubt of rather recent origin) in a venerable shared past takes a great flight. For more remarks on the importance of the past in Ptolemaic ideology and hence in Alexandrian literature, see Ch. 1.3.

origins, which are authentic, authoritative, and, paradoxically, fresh. It is therefore no surprise to find that mythical bards are employed as models or alter egos in the bid for authority among contemporaries and to forge a connection to what is experienced as the true root of the present of poetry, the mythical past. How this applies to the character of Orpheus in the *Argonautica* will be the subject of the following section.

3.3. *Orpheus in Greek Tradition*

In order to appreciate the associations Orpheus carried for readers of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, one must be aware of the way he was viewed by the Greeks in general. He enjoys a special position in Greek culture, being neither a fully legendary or divine figure (e.g. Heracles or Dionysus) nor a plausible historical author (such as Homer or Solon). As West puts it: "The stories portray him not as a distant forerunner of Homer, but a singer of a different type: one who can exercise power over the natural world and who can countermand death itself, a 'shamanistic' figure."[17]

Four basic elements in the myth of Orpheus have been attested since classical times:[18] 1) he was a singer and lyre player able to enchant inanimate and animate nature;[19] 2) he was an Argonaut;[20] 3) he (successfully or otherwise) prevailed upon the powers of the netherworld to release his wife;[21] 4) he was killed by Maenads or Thracian women, in some versions because they considered him the inventor of pederasty, in others because he refused to honor Bacchus.[22] Although the myth surrounding him is therefore more or less consistent, Orpheus remains controversial in many

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[17] Such shamanistic features are e.g. his enchantment of nature, his ability to travel into the realm of the dead and communicate with the souls of the dead (West 1983: 4–5).

[18] The very first mention in Greek literature (Ibycus, sixth cent. BCE) already calls Orpheus ὀνομάκλυτος, famous (fr. 25 *PMG*). All ancient *testimonia* regarding Orpheus may be found in Kern (1972 [1922]); on Orpheus in general see also Guthrie (1952 [1935]), Robbins (1982), West (1983), Burkert (1985: 296–301), Segal (1989), Massaracchi (1993), Bernabé (2007).

[19] E.g. Bacch. 289b; Aesch. *Ag*. 1630; Eur. *Ba*. 562; *IA* 1211–1213, cf. Kern *test*. 47–55.

[20] Simon. fr. 567 (cf. 544–548, 576, 595 *PMG*); Pi. *P*. 4.176; Herodorus 31F 42–43. An alternative tradition claimed Philammon was the Argo's musician (Pherec. 3F26, cf. *scholia ad Arg*. 1.23). On the Sicyonian treasury at Delphi (570–560 BC), Argo is represented with two singers aboard, one identified as ΟΡΦΑΣ (Mus. 1323–1323a1210).

[21] Eur. *Alc*. 357–359, Pl. *Symp*. 179d, Isoc. *Busiris* 8.

[22] Pl. *Symp*. 179d, *Resp*. 620a. Orpheus' death at the hand of Maenads because of his refusal to honor Bacchus also seems to have been the theme of Aeschylus' *Bassarae*.

respects. Plato places him before the Trojan war.[23] Herodotus, on the other hand, maintains that Orpheus is to be dated after Homer and Hesiod (*Hist.* 2.53). Aristotle apparently did not even believe Orpheus had ever existed. It is no surprise, then, that the problems of authentication of Orphic writings are widely acknowledged. The problematic Orphic corpus known to the classical and Hellenistic ages consisted of *Theogonies*, hymns, oracles, and ritual verse relating to the afterlife and the mysteries that allowed initiates access to it.[24] Different from the Orphic myth, however, it does not show great consistency in beliefs or phrasing.

In Hellenistic poetry (third century BCE onwards), the basic image of Orpheus remained substantially the same as in the classical age. There is however a novel, playfully romanticized, approach to the myth of his love for his wife or his pederasty. These items in his biography make him an excellent candidate for featuring as a kind of *prōtos heuretēs* of heterosexual or homosexual erotic elegy/lyric monody, as in Hermesianax' elegiac catalogue of poets and their beloveds, *Leontion* (fr. 7.1–14 Powell) and Phanocles' Ἔρωτες ἢ Καλοί (fr. 1 Powell, an elegiac catalogue of homosexual loves).

3.4. *Orpheus in the* Argonautica

As noted, Orpheus is introduced quite emphatically at the top of the Catalogue of Argonauts by Apollonius. The way in which he is described raises the expectation that his miraculous enchantments will be of paramount importance to the action. Yet, as we saw, at first sight his direct importance to the narration is not so easy to define, apart from the fact that he, as I argued above, in the catalogue symbolizes a technical aspect of Apollonius' narrator. Throughout the epic his performances are restricted to either singing or instigating the foundation of new cults, actions which hardly classify as heroic feats in the traditional sense, or as spectacular miraculous enchantments. Only when he saves the Argonauts from the Sirens does his presence on the Argo seem fully justified (4.902–909), as the ancient *scholia* claim.[25] ζητεῖται δέ, διὰ τί Ὀρφεὺς ἀσθενὴς ὢν συνέπλει τοῖς ἥρωσιν. (It is asked why Orpheus, weak as he is, sailed along with the heroes). The scholiast's

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[23] Pl. *Leg.* 677d; on Orpheus in Plato see Masaracchi (1993: 173–195).
[24] See in general West (1983).
[25] *Schol. ad Arg.* 1.23.

explanation is partly extrapolated from Apollonius' own text: ὅτι μάντις ὢν ὁ Χείρων ἔχρησε δύνασθαι καὶ τὰς Σειρῆνας παρελθεῖν αὐτοὺς Ὀρφέως συμπλέοντος. (Because Chiron, being a seer, prophesied that they could even pass by the Sirens if Orpheus sailed along.)

Since Orpheus is predominantly represented as *a singer* by Apollonius, it seems a natural start to analyze his performances in this field closely. They comprise the following passages:[26]

(a) 1.494–515: cosmogony/divine succession song
(b) 1.540: rowing song
(c) 1.569–572: song for Artemis
(d) 2.161–162: song to honor victory of Polydeuces over Amycus
(e) 2.685–693: song for Apollo
(f) 4.902–909: song against the Sirens (unclear what kind of song)
(g) 4.1158–1160 and 1193–1196: songs for the wedding for Jason and Medea

Considering the evident interest of Hellenistic scholarship in the historical development and classification of poetry, it may be profitable to ask what kind of songs the mythic bard Orpheus is presented as singing and why, as well as how the Alexandrians would have classified them.[27] Some of the passages obviously fail to indicate whether a song (in the sense of melody and lyrics) is performed or what kind of song it might be. These are items (b) (the "rowing song") and (f) (the "song against the Sirens"). The rowing song (b), if indeed a song, must have concentrated on rhythm rather than text. Orpheus here functions as the "*keleustēs*" of the Argonauts, ensuring that their rowing will be orderly. It is noteworthy that the rowing of the Argonauts to Orpheus' accompaniment is compared to a dance for Apollo in the preceding lines.[28] As has often been observed,

[26] Other, dubious candidates are 1.1134–1137 (the dance for Rhea) and 4.1409–1422 (prayer to the Hesperides). The first is like a *Pyrrhiche* (armed dance); it is not certain whether Orpheus performs music on this occasion; in the second case it is certain that he does not, but the passage resembles the ὕμνος κλητικός, cf. Ardizzoni (1967: *ad Arg.* 4.1141). Prayer and hymn are often hard to distinguish, cf. Furley and Bremer (2001: 3).

[27] *Suda s.v.* Απολλώνιος states that Apollonius was head librarian of the Alexandrian library, so he would have been interested in development and classification of poetry from a professional point of view.

[28] *Arg.* 1.536–541: οἱ δ', ὥστ' ἠίθεοι Φοίβῳ χορὸν ἢ ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ / ἤ που ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ ἢ ἐφ' ὕδασιν Ἰσμηνοῖο / στησάμενοι, φόρμιγγος ὕπαὶ περὶ βωμὸν ὁμαρτῇ / ἐμμελέως κραιπνοῖσι πέδον ῥήσσωσι πόδεσσιν—/ ὣς οἱ ὑπ' Ὀρφῆος κιθάρῃ πέπληγον ἐρετμοῖς / πόντου λάβρον ὕδωρ, ἐπὶ δὲ ῥόθια κλύζοντο … (And just as youths set up

this implies that the whole journey of the Argonauts is in some sense a ceremony in honor of the god Apollo, just as the song of this entire exploit, the *Argonautica*, is presented as a hymn in his honor (cf. below on *Arg.* 1.1–4). This of course also creates an implicit connection between the dedicatee, Apollo, the author of the poem, Apollonius, and the musician who stirs on the rowing Argonauts, Orpheus.

The musical performance aimed against the Sirens (f) is characterized as κραιπνὸν ἐυτροχάλοιο μέλος ἀοιδῆς (a swift strain of quick-moving song).[29] This evidently does little to help classification; it might just be a more vigorous and quicker version of the rowing song (b). The last phrase of the passage moreover, παρθενίην δ' ἐνοπὴν ἐβιήσατο φόρμιγξ (and the lyre overcame their maiden voice, 4.909) implies that the sound of the lyre is more important than any vocal performance by Orpheus. The type of music is really irrelevant, since the performance's sole function is to deafen the Argonauts to the dangerous voices of the Sirens, and make them move on. Just as in the case of the rowing song, however, its primary purpose is to *create order*, or at least counteract the chaotic forces of the chthonic singers that are the Sirens, who threaten the success of the journey. In both cases, Orpheus ensures the orderly progression of the Argo, and thus of the Argo's story.

The other songs (a, c, d, e, g) are more promising in terms of classification. They are moreover united by a number of prominent characteristics. Items (a) (c) and (e) all have *religious contents*. Item (a)

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a dance in honor of Phoebus either in Pytho or haply in Ortygia, or by the waters of Ismenus, and to the sound of the lyre round his altar all together in time beat the earth with swiftly moving feet; so they to the sound of Orpheus' lyre smote with their oars the rushing sea-water and the surge broke over the blades … transl. Seaton).

[29] *Arg.* 4.902–909: (…) ἀπηλεγέως δ' ἄρα καὶ τοῖς / ἵεσαν ἐκ στομάτων ὄπα λείριον· οἱ δ' ἀπὸ νηός / ἤδη πείσματ' ἔμελλον ἐπ' ἠιόνεσσι βαλέσθαι, / εἰ μὴ ἄρ' Οἰάγροιο πάις Θρηίκιος Ὀρφεύς, Βιστονίην ἐνὶ χερσὶν ἑαῖς φόρμιγγα τανύσσας, / κραιπνὸν ἐυτροχάλοιο μέλος κανάχησεν ἀοιδῆς, / ὄφρ' ἄμυδις κλονέοντος ἐπιβρομέωνται ἀκουαί / κρεγμῷ· παρθενίην δ' ἐνοπὴν ἐβιήσατο φόρμιγξ. (And suddenly to the heroes too, they sent forth from their lips a lily-like voice. And they were already about to cast from the ship the hawsers to the shore, had not Thracian Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, stringing in his hands his Bistonian lyre, rung forth the hasty snatch of a rippling melody so that their ears might be filled with the sound of his twanging; and the lyre overcame the maidens' voice. transl. Seaton). Kyriakou (1995: 190–205) and Hunter (1996: 146–147) propose to interpret this passage as a meta-poetical statement in which Orpheus stands for "new music" drowning out Homeric epic; I prefer to follow Knight (1995) and read the passage as a reworking of and reaction to the Homeric passage, cf. Klooster (2007: 185–200). For the significance of the Homeric Sirens, cf. Gresseth (1970: 203–218) and Pucci (1979: 121–132); on Sirens in general, Hofstetter (1990).

is a cosmogony/divine succession song;[30] (c) and (e) are both hymns to Apollo and to his sister Artemis. Item (g) refers to the *epithalamia/hymenaea* (wedding songs) for Jason and Medea;[31] these may also be said to contain a certain element of religion since they address invocations to Hymenaeus (4.1197) and Hera (4.1199).[32] Item (d) finally celebrates the victory of one of the Dioscuri (Polydeuces) over Amycus, King of the Bebrycians, in a boxing match. Again, the songs are united by a certain *ordering* quality. The cosmogony is *qualitate qua* an orderly way of setting out how the grand scheme of the universe (the cosmos, the world-order) came into being; apart from that it has a calming effect on the listeners, who before Orpheus' song were quarrelling (Idmon and Idas). The *Hymn to Apollo* recounts Apollo's defeat of the monster Delphyne, another chthonic, chaotic force, representing primeval disorder. The wedding song for Jason and Medea confirms that their love is fitted into the orderly scheme of society; they are now lawfully man and wife; Medea will not be rendered to the Colchians. The victory song for Polydeus is once more a celebration of victory of order and civilization in the figure of Polydeuces over barbarian lawlessness in the form of Amycus.

It is noteworthy that the word ἐμμελέως (harmonious) returns in passages (b), (g), and (d) describing the actions of the Argonauts. This confirms that Orpheus creates harmony whenever he plays his music (preeminently a form of *order*, cf. *LSJ s.v.* ἐμμελής II).

It seems clear then, that Orpheus' songs are religious lyric music, eminently able to establish harmony and order. Presumably, the Alexandrians would therefore have considered the majority of them as types of hymn: religious song praising the gods. Orpheus' concerns are the origin of the cosmos and the gods and their praises, in orderly, harmonious compositions. Such praise was what the Greeks considered to be the original function of poetry, as is for instance stated in the famous *testimonium* about Pindar fr. 31 Snell-Maehler. This one-sentence report says that Pindar recounted the origin of all song thus: at the marriage of Zeus, or his ascendancy to power, Zeus asked the gods what was needed to complete

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[30] On possible points of contact with Orphic lore, cf. West (1983: 116). There also appears to be Empedoclean influence underlying the form of the cosmogony here, cf. *scholia ad loc.* and Levin (1971: 217).

[31] The fact that the *epithalamium* was sung twice caused Fränkel to excise lines 4.1193–1196. Ardizzoni (1967 *ad loc.*) points out that there are two kinds of *epithalamia*: the *katakoimetika* (on the eve of the wedding) and the *orthria* or *diegertika* (to raise the newlyweds). This suggests that Apollonius was aware of the finesses of tradition.

[32] On the hymnic features of *epithalamia*, cf. Furley and Bremer (2001: 32).

the cosmos and they asked for the Muses to provide music and words, to serve as "kosmos" (adornment, final ordering) of the universe.[33]

As we saw, other Hellenistic poets found it attractive to cast Orpheus as a *prōtos heuretēs*. Overall, it does not appear that Apollonius had any special interest in presenting him thus,[34] with one possible exception, namely the song Orpheus sings to celebrate Polydeuces' victory in the boxing match (item d). This specific passage holds, as I argue, some special clues. The song is sung to celebrate a victory in a boxing match, but the term Apollonius explicitly uses to describe it, is ὕμνος (hymn). This has caused surprise and misunderstanding,[35] since, as we saw, in ancient poetic taxonomy, "hymn" primarily indicated "a song in honor of a god" while here the Argonauts sing in honor of their crewmember Polydeuces, whom they do not revere as a god elsewhere.[36] Hermann Fränkel (1968, *ad loc.*) suggests, the passage should perhaps be interpreted as describing the origins (*aitia*) of epinician ode. Apollonius would have been aware that these odes often contained hymnic elements praising gods or heroic athletes, especially the Dioscuri and Heracles.[37] He may have sought to explain this fact by making Orpheus, a contemporary of these heroes, and predominantly known as singer of hymns, the inventor of the genre, a singer of a proto-epinician hymn. So there is another item that can be added to the list of characteristics defining the *Argonautica*'s Orpheus and his music: he is credited with the invention of epinician song, which praises heroes in a particularly hymnic manner.

Besides his songs, Orpheus' *non-musical* actions are also important to the success of the expedition on a number of occasions. The common denominator of these actions is once more a *religious, ordering* component. At all times, Orpheus functions as the mediator between the Argonauts and the gods, one who helps to establish or restore the (disturbed) relationship between humans and the divine world, often by

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[33] Cf. Snell (1975 [1946]: 94–95), Ford (2002: 143).

[34] Nor is Orpheus presented as first *kitharistēs* ever either, cf. the references to Amphion (*Arg.* 1.740).

[35] The scholiast thinks a ὕμνος has to praise an Olympian god, since he interprets "the Therapnaean son of Zeus" as Apollo (*schol. ad* 1.162–163), like Färber (1932: 81). However, the phrase must indicate Polydeuces, the son of Zeus, who was born and had a cult in Therapnae, Sparta (cf. Vian 1974 *ad loc.*).

[36] Cf. Pl. *Resp.* 607a: ὕμνους θεοῖς καὶ ἐγκώμια τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς. (Hymns for the gods and encomia for noble men, cf. *Leg.* 822b).

[37] The term "Castor- or Iolaos-song" is used by Pindar (*P.* 2.69; *I.* 1.16), cf. Robbins (1997: 244).

introduction of a new cult. This makes him like a priest who knows at which moment what kind of religious action is required (dedication, prayer, apotropaic dance) to recreate the correct harmony between the divine and the human world. Contrary to the seers who join the Argonautic quest (Idmon, Mopsus and Phineus), Orpheus is no real prophet: he does not explicitly know or predict the will of the gods; he can only guess at it. However, this he does well, which gains him a position of great importance in the community of the Argonauts.

Significantly, in half of the occasions, the god to whom tribute is paid on the instigations of Orpheus is *Apollo*. For him Orpheus founds an altar at Thynia (2.685–693) and on different occasions he dedicates his lyre and a tripod to him (2.928–929. 4.1547–1459 resp.). Throughout, Apollo clearly is the most important god to the expedition in the perception of Orpheus.[38] Likewise, he is of prime importance in the perception of the narrator who famously addresses the poem to him:[39]

> Ἀρχόμενος σέο Φοῖβε παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν
> μνήσομαι οἳ Πόντοιο κατὰ στόμα καὶ διὰ πέτρας
> Κυανέας βασιλῆος ἐφημοσύνῃ Πελίαο
> χρύσειον μετὰ κῶας ἐύζυγον ἤλασαν Ἀργώ. (*Arg.* 1.1–4)
>
> Beginning with you, Phoebus, I shall recall the famous deeds of men born long ago, who, at the command of King Pelias, sailed the well-benched Argo through the mouth of the black sea and between the Cyanean rocks, to fetch the golden fleece. (transl. Race)

3.5. *Orpheus and the Hymnic* Argonautica

So what relevance does the portrayal of this epitome of religious poetic art and prophetic insight in the divine balance of the cosmos have for the self-representation of Apollonius' poetic persona? The peculiar beginning of the epic (*Arg.* 1.1–4) cited above holds a clue. The significance of this *hymnic* invocation to Apollo at the beginning of the *epic Argonautica* has been interpreted in various ways. It has mostly been read as a reference to the traditional practice of starting an epic with a hymn to

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[38] The other occasions are: initiation of the Argonauts in the rites of the Cabiri (1.915–917); instigation of armed dance in honor of Great Mother (1.1134); prayer of appeasement to the Hesperides (4.1409–1422).

[39] It is through Apollo's oracle that the expedition was set going, as the narrator reveals at the beginning of his poem (*Arg.* 1.4, 8): before departure (1.359–362 and 1.440–447, through the mouth of Idmon) it was prophesized that the Argonauts would accomplish their task if they sacrificed to Apollo.

a god (*prooemium*), as is the alleged function of the *Homeric Hymns*,[40] or the hymn to the Muses at the beginning of Hesiod's *Theogony*.[41] If this were true, the hymnic proem would in the *Argonautica*'s case have been shortened to the mere invocation in the first line. However, as was demonstrated, the god Apollo plays a key role in numerous instances in the *Argonautica* and is mentioned by name in a variety of contexts. This suggests that he is continually important in the background and that this epic is, in a sense, both *about* him and in praise of him.[42] The hymn-like ending of the *Argonautica*, saluting the Argonauts as μακάρων γένος (best translated as "race of gods" 4.1773–1781)[43] is also remarkable. It is unparalleled in extant epic, and obviously reminiscent of hymns.[44] Yet, surely it goes too far to claim, as some have done, that the whole *Argonautica* is intended as one long hymnic proem.[45] I would rather argue that the incorporation of hymnic elements indicates that Apollonius wanted closely to relate his own epic song to the songs of Orpheus, which, as we have seen, are predominantly hymn-like and often related to the worship of Apollo.

To make this more compelling, the poet's invocation of Apollo at the beginning of the epic may be connected to Orpheus' own hymn to Apollo (2.702–713), in which the voices of the narrator and Orpheus blend so completely as to become indistinguishable:

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40 Thuc. 3.104.4, a discussion of the relevance of this passage for the *Homeric Hymns* can be found in Richardson (1974: 3–5).

41 Hunter (1996: 49–51) remarks upon the remarkable popularity of hymns in Hellenistic poetry, e.g. Call. *Hymns*; the hymnic opening of Arat. *Phaen*.; Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus*. Theocr. *Id*. 17 also plays with the format of hymn; *Id*. 22 is a hymn, *Id*. 24 probably had a hymn-like ending. The song about Daphnis in *Id*. 1 is also called a hymn. This preference for hymns may have been influenced by the god-like status of the King (esp. Call. *Hymn* I and IV, Theoc. *Id*. 17, 22 and 24).

42 Cf. Cuypers (2004: 44): "Apollo is the cause of the poem's action, the cause of its narration and the divine model of its main hero (Jason is associated with Apollo throughout the poem)." The name Apollo recurs 21 times (bk 1: 307 360, 403, 410, 502, 759, 966, 1181, 1186; bk 2: 493, 686, 700, 927, 952, bk 3 1283; bk 4: 528, 612, 1218; 1548, 1714, 1759) while the epithet Phoebus returns seventeen times (bk 1: 1, 301, 353, 536, 759, bk 2: 216, 506, 702, 713, 847, bk 4: 529, 1490, 1493, 1550, 1702, 1717,1718) and Paiēōn once (4.1511). Apollo plays hardly any role in book 3 (Medea's love, the events in Colchis); this fits the fact that Orpheus too is virtually absent in this book.

43 Cuypers (2004: 45); cf. on the similar phrase in Theoc. *Id*. 17, Fantuzzi (2001: 232–241).

44 It does however find a striking parallel in the elegiac "*New Simonides*" (*P. Oxy*. 3965), which ends as a hymn to the hero Achilles. See on this poem Boedeker and Sider (2001).

45 Cf. Hunter (1996: 46): "… the *Argonautica* of Apollonius is framed as a 'Hymn to the Argonauts,' that is, a hymn on the traditional 'Homeric' model in which the central mythic narrative has been greatly extended, but in which the hymnic frame remains."

(...) σὺν δέ σφιν ἐὺς πάις Οἰάγροιο
Βιστονίῃ φόρμιγγι λιγείης ἦρχεν ἀοιδῆς·
ὥς ποτε πετραίῃ ὑπὸ δειράδι Παρνησσοῖο
Δελφύνην τόξοισι πελώριον ἐξενάριξεν,
κοῦρος ἐὼν ἔτι γυμνός, ἔτι πλοκάμοισι γεγηθώς
(ἱλήκοις· αἰεί τοι, ἄναξ, ἄτμητοι ἔθειραι,
αἰὲν ἀδήλητοι, τὼς γὰρ θέμις, οἰόθι δ' αὐτή
Λητὼ Κοιογένεια φίλαις ἐνὶ χερσὶν ἀφάσσει).
πολλὰ δὲ Κωρύκιαι νύμφαι, Πλειστοῖο θύγατρες,
θαρσύνεσκον ἔπεσσιν, "ἵη ἵε" κεκληγυῖαι·
ἔνθεν δὴ τόδε καλὸν ἐφύμνιον ἔπλετο Φοίβῳ. (*Arg.* 2.702–713)

And among them the noble son of Oeagrus led off a clear song on his Bistonian lyre, telling how once upon a time beneath Parnassus' rocky ridge the god killed monstrous Delphynes with his arrows, when he was still a naked boy, still delighting in his long locks—be gracious, lord, may your hair always remain unshorn, always unharmed, for such is right; and only Leto herself, Coeus' daughter, strokes it with her dear hands—and often did the Corycian nymphs, the daughters of Pleistus encourage him with their words, as they shouted *Ieie*. From there arose this beautiful refrain for Phoebus. (transl. Race)

The passage begins as indirect discourse (*Arg.* 2.704–705) but soon "slips into" direct address of the god (*Arg.* 2.708). Thus, the distinction between the voices of the narrator and Orpheus becomes difficult, if not impossible, making this one of the most significant performances of Orpheus, if he is to be considered Apollonius' text-internal alter ego.[46] Orpheus is here singing a hymn to Apollo, like the narrator of the *Argonautica*, 1.1–4. He moreover provides *aitia* for aspects of the *cult* of Apollo-Paieon (2.711–713), which again makes him resemble the narrator, who recounts *aitia* for various (Apollo-) cults on numerous occasions in the epic.

Something crucial moreover happens at the point where Orpheus—or is it the narrator?–states that at the moment young Apollo slew Delphyne, his hair was *still uncut*. I propose that what happens here is that, from the perspective of Orpheus, the word *still* (ἔτι, 2.707) may be in order: the long locks that betoken Apollo's youth belong *for Orpheus*, denizen of the heroic world, to a very recent past. Presumably this implies that in Orpheus' own day, Apollo was still (relatively) young. In this way, Apollo is turned, for the moment, into an intra-diegetical character in the narrative, who is more or less contemporaneous with Orpheus. This

[46] Cf. Hunter (1993: 150–151), Cuypers (2004: 59).

is exactly why the narrator "Apollonius" now steps in to correct the "slip" that his character (or alter ego) Orpheus has made here. In the narrator's present, Apollo of course still exists, but as the narrator now realizes, he is *forever* (αἰεί) young, forever rejoicing in his unshorn locks. Thus the god Apollo provides a constant, a religious continuum, hymned both intra-diegetically by Orpheus, and in the narrator's own words and own world at the moment of the composition of the *Argonautica*. The blending of voices effects thus that both the narrator and Orpheus seem simultaneously to be hymning Apollo, from different points in time. Their songs converge on Apollo. This is indeed a strong link between the two bards, and a very strong link connecting Apollonius to the origins of poetry in the person of Orpheus.

A significant parallel for the hymn-like *ending* of the epic in honor of the Argonauts may now be found in another performance of Orpheus, the epinician hymn for Polydeuces (2.161–162), singled out above. There, a (semi) mortal was given divine honor in song. This is comparable to the explicit poetic aims of the *Argonautica* in which the "men born long ago," (παλαιγενέων … φωτῶν *Arg.* 1.1) whose deeds are sung of to honor Apollo, ultimately become ἀριστήων μακάρων γένος (4.1773) "a race of blessed heroes" honored for their own sake in the process of the narration:

> Ἵλατ' ἀριστήων μακάρων γένος, αἵδε δ' ἀοιδαί
> εἰς ἔτος ἐξ ἔτεος γλυκερώτεραι εἶεν ἀείδειν
> ἀνθρώποις … (*Arg.* 4. 1773–1775)
>
> Be gracious, you race of blessed heroes, and may these songs year after year be sweeter for men to sing.[47] (transl. Race)

The two dominant features of Orpheus' portrayal, his hymnic interest in particularly Apollo and his invention of an epinician hymn celebrating heroes, therefore emphatically return in Apollonius' narrating persona, which has recently been characterized as follows:

> By assuming the role of a hymnic narrator, Apollonius underscores that the *Argonautica*'s narrative goal is praising: praising both the gods and the "famous deeds of men born long ago." This double goal (simultaneous celebration of human exploits and the gods) is shared with the victory odes of Pindar, whom we may regard as a model for the *Argonautica*'s narrator. (Cuypers, 2004: 45)

[47] This is the text of Ω Fränkel and Vian's emendation ἀριστῆες would translate "heroes, offspring of the blessed gods."

It may now however be added that Apollonius' choice to endow his epic with these striking formal characteristics of hymn may indicate that he also wished to return to what he apparently perceived as Orpheus' preferred genre, the songs of praise for the divine and for heroes, hymn. Thus, with the form of the *Argonautica* and his representation of Orpheus, Apollonius points back to the beginnings and original function of poetry: religious song that brings order and harmony to the world. In doing so, at the same time he creates something seemingly new by combining generic elements of two types of poetry which had in his day become distinct: epic and hymn.

I would suggest, therefore, that Apollonius (perhaps even playing on the meaning of his name and his function as a "priest of the Muses and Apollo" in the Museum of Alexandria, cf. Chapters 6 and 7 respectively) wished to present himself as a latter-day embodiment of the Apollo-related singer/religious expert Orpheus, one who brings order in the tangled traditions about the past.[48] Like Orpheus, who is not always able to grasp the intentions of the gods at the time of the events yet has a divinely guided intuition, Apollonius with difficulty establishes and orders the true narrative of these events, whose stories he found in the scrolls of the Museum (cf. Ch. 7), the shrine of the Muses. And these he dedicates to the god who originally set them in motion and inspires him to sing of them many centuries afterwards. Orpheus is an illustration of Apollonius' ideas about the origins and aims of poetry and the role of religion in it. His ancient authority legitimates contemporary poetical practice, especially Apollonius' own. Apollonius' ordering of events of long ago, the *Argonautica*, can be seen as a direct sequel to Orpheus' own cosmogonic and hymnic songs.

3.6. *Theocritus and the Invention of Bucolic Poetry*

Since antiquity, the search for the origins of bucolic poetry has been a favorite scholarly pursuit.[49] This ongoing interest can be partly explained

[48] For the politico-religious overtones of the Museum and its employees, see Fraser (1972: I, 324), Weber (1993: 353), (Too 1998: 119). The function Apollonius held as head of the library was called ἐπιστάτης or, significantly, ἱερεῦς. Diod. Sic. calls the Alexandrian Library "sacred" (1.49.3). For the idea that Orpheus in particular resembles the wise counselor-type *alter ego*, as found in Hesiod, cf. Cuypers (2004: 59, n. 30).

[49] Cf. Wendel (1914: 1–13: *Prolegomena*), Reitzenstein (1893), Rosenmeyer (1969: Ch. "Beginnings"), Halperin (1983), Nauta (1990), Gutzwiller (1991), Hunter (1999,

by the fact that the first bucolic poems known to us, those of Theocritus,[50] "inscribe within themselves a sense of tradition."[51] Of course, there may have been singing rustics before Theocritus in historical reality as well as in literary fiction, yet bucolic poetry as such remains a Hellenistic invention that must be ascribed to Theocritus alone. This section will therefore analyze the way in which he creates the impression that he works in a long standing tradition of singing herdsmen, illustrating how he hints that he is following time-honored practices and emulating predecessors while actually establishing the tradition at the moment he is writing about it.

The first question that should be addressed in this context is: what exactly is "bucolic poetry?"[52] This term would seem to derive passages in the *Idylls* themselves where characters refer to their songs as βουκολικὰ ἀοιδά (bucolic song, *Id.* 1, 7). Bucolic (βουκολικός)[53] of course literally means "related to ox herd/cowherd" (βουκόλος), but what exactly does "bucolic song" amount to? What are its particular formal and content-related characteristics? Is it a *genre*? An initial methodological problem is the distinction between "the songs represented in the poems" and "the poems as written by Theocritus." Which of these correspond to the relevant bucolic poetry? For the time being, the term "bucolic poetry" will be taken to mean both the Theocritean poems featuring (singing) herdsmen and, within these poems, the songs that these herdsmen sing.[54]

It is important that use of hexameter, not a lyric but an epic metre, is prevalent in both the *Idylls* and the songs of the herdsmen. The *Idylls* and the herdsmen's songs moreover both contain a high quantity of

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5–12), Bernsdorff (2001), Fantuzzi (2008: 569–600); I have regrettably been unable to read this last article.

[50] The earliest collections that included Theocritus' poetry (together with that of Moschus and Bion) were called βουκολικά, cf. Nauta (1990: 117–137) with bibliography. This is also the title Vergil adopted for his pastoral poems, otherwise known as the *Eclogues*.

[51] Hunter (2004: 83); on the topic of "beginnings," see Gutzwiller (1991: 1–5).

[52] For the distinction *bucolic* versus *pastoral*, see e.g. Rosenmeyer (1969), Halperin (1983). Suffice it to say that pastoral developed from bucolic.

[53] For the connotations of βουκολικός, cf. *Proleg.* D8: τὰ τῶν ἀγροίκων ἤθη ἐκμάσσεται αὕτη ἡ ποίησις, τερπνῶς πάνυ τοὺς τῇ ἀγροικίᾳ σκυθρωποὺς κατὰ τὸν βίον χαρακτηρίζουσα. (This kind of poetry mimics the characters of rustics, characterizing the boorishness of those in the countryside very charmingly and true to life). For βουκόλος as lowly slave, cf. Pl. *Ion* 540c.

[54] The herdsmen regard the songs they perform as *bucolic song* (βουκολιάσδεσθαι or βουκολικά ἀοιδά, cf. *Id.* 1.64 etc.; 7.36, 5.44, 5.69).

Doricisms sometimes mixed with epic Ionic forms. The Doricisms can probably best be explained as a rendering of the dialect that was spoken in Theocritus' hometown, Syracuse (a Corinthian colony), and perhaps more broadly in the region of south-eastern Sicily.[55] For contemporary audiences not from this area, however, they may have carried associations with the choral lyric of tragedy or Pindaric epinician. Significantly, this dialect and metre also occur in *Idylls* not featuring herdsmen.[56]

A trait that calls attention to Theocritus' role as author in fashioning the written form and content of the poems is the artificiality and intertextuality of the language of the *Idylls*. They employ an idiom that is wholly constructed and could never have been spoken by the rural inhabitants of Sicily;[57] it is a bewildering mixture of high-flown, allusive Homerisms and down-to-earth, everyday colloquialisms.[58] The strange clashes between the two stylistic levels within the idiom, and between the elevated metre and common subject matter may emphasize the utter artificiality of the poetic world created by Theocritus; on another level, they invite the reader to consider how, at one time, long ago, herdsmen perhaps really spoke in Homeric language.[59] At any rate, because of his knowledge of Homeric usage, the reader is constantly referred to the author who presents them as speaking thus.[60] At the same time, the epic

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[55] Ruijgh's thesis (1984) that this dialect is an imitation of Cyrenaic elitist idiom cannot be considered proven, in view of Theocritus' Syracusan origin, cf. Hunter (1999: 21–24). Still, the presence of Cyrenaic forms in Theocritus' Doric remains tantalizing, cf. Dover (1971: xxxvi–xlv).

[56] Excluding the Aeolic *Idylls* 28, 29, 30.

[57] On the problems of establishing linguistic variants in the *Idylls*, cf. e.g. Dover (1971: xxxi–xlv). He names as sources for Theocritus' diction: epic, Syracusan poets (Epicharmus, Sophron), choral lyric (in particular Pindar, but possibly also the lost works of Simonides and Stesichorus) and individual Doric dialects of Theocritus' own time.

[58] See Dover (1971: li), colloquialisms esp. in 5 and 10 (oaths and proverbs: e.g. 5.23: ὗς ποτ' Ἀθαναίαν ἔριν ἤρισεν … (the pig once challenged Athena …); 5.26–27: τίς τρίχας ἀντ ἐρίων ἐποκίξατο; τίς δὲ παρεύσας / αἶγος πρατοτόκοιο κακάν κύνα δήλετ' ἀμέλγειν; (Who shears hairs for wool, or chooses to milk a filthy bitch when a goat with her first kid stands ready? transl. Gow); Homerisms: e.g. 7.137: κατειβόμενον κελάρυζε, 7.139: ἔχον πόνον, 11.27: ὁδὸν ἁγεμόνευον). For the idea of such Homerisms as "genre-markers" that simultaneously indicate the reference to and distance from the original, cf. Zanker (1998: 225–227).

[59] On the Hellenistic tendency to combine low subject matter with elevated style/genre (esp. epic), see Zanker (1987: 139–144).

[60] Cf. Gutzwiller (1991: 5): "To ignore the part played by transformation in giving these speech acts [sc. of simple herdsmen] literary form is to miss something even more fundamental to pastoral than to other genres, the tension between what is being represented and the act of representation."

metre brings into question the position these poems take in the tradition of Greek heroic poetry and the intertextuality is a warning that this poetry is not a product of spontaneous creation on the hillsides of Sicily, but rather of a learned and playful reception of disparate elements from the Greek literary heritage.[61] Once more, it should be pointed out that these features are found not only in the bucolic *Idylls*, but are also shared by other works, including the (urban) mimes 2, 14, and 15.

In bucolic song, one theme predominates: (unrequited) love (*Id.* 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, and 11).[62] Other recurrent motifs are the *locus amoenus*, described with the employment of many rare botanical words,[63] the flocks, and the fate of mythical herdsmen (*Id.* 1, 3, 7, and 11). It would furthermore appear that in Greek poetry before Theocritus literary renderings of rustic song had often been associated specifically with Sicily and the legendary herdsmen (in particular the Cyclopes and Daphnis) inhabiting this island.[64] This geographical setting reappears in some of the bucolic poems (*Id.* 1, 6, and 11).

So bucolic poetry is artificial, intertextual, and sophisticated poetry by or about herdsmen in an elevated language, style and meter, meant to collide with its subject matter, recounting the experiences (of unrequited love) of simple countrymen. It is written in hexameter, employing a mixture of Doric and Ionic forms, and reveals a geographical connection with Sicily. However, the only truly distinguishing characteristic of this kind of poetry is that it deals with (singing) herdsmen. Can this poetry be called a genre in its own right? A complicating factor is the circumstance that the whole collection of Theocritus' poetry, including the "urban

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[61] E.g. the description of the goatherd's cup (*Id.* 1.28–60) is usually considered a reference to the shield description in *Il.* 18 or the [Hesiodic] *Scutum*. *Id.* 11 also contains several allusions to Hom. *Od.* 9, e.g. lines 50–54; 61; 79. See e.g. Hunter (1999 *ad loc.*).

[62] This is also the predominant theme of urban or mythical poems 2, 13, 14. However, see Stanzel (1995: 146): "*Theokrits Hirtendichtung ist in einem konstitutiven Sinn Liebesdichtung oder erotische Poesie*."

[63] They share this feature with the mythological *Id.* 13 and 22, cf. Rosenmeyer (1969: 179–206), Hunter (1999: 12–16). On Theocritus' interest in botany and the idea that he may have been a botanist, see Lindsell (1937: 78–93), Lembach (1970).

[64] In Homer, the Cyclops is not localized, but in later tradition, he was supposed to have lived on Sicily near Etna. In *Od.* 9 Polyphemus is a herdsman, although he is hardly a musical personage; Eur. *Cyclops* (set on Sicily) features a distinctly bucolic song (42–81); cf. the song of the chorus in Ar. *Plut.* 290–315 (presumably a parody of Philoxenus' dithyramb, which portrayed the Cyclops as a singer, *PMG* 817). Daphnis is usually a Sicilian herdsman, cf. e.g. Diod. Sic. 4.84.

mimes" (2, 14, 15), the mythological poems (13, 18, 22, 24, 25, 26), the encomia (16, 17), and the pederastic poems (12, 29, 30, 31), was apparently known under the title Βουκολικά in antiquity.[65] Apart from this, there is the tricky definition of "genre," always a problem, not least when it comes to the Hellenistic period.[66]

To start with, it is reasonably certain that in antiquity, the *Idylls*[67] were regarded as a subspecies of epic on formal grounds (meter).[68] This approach took no account of the (non-heroic) content or of formal elements such as dramatic representation of dialogue[69] and Doric dialect. In antiquity, apparently, Theocritus' poems could simply be called "bucolic" and "epic." There are two possible explanations for this. The poems could have come to be called bucolic after their most distinguishing examples: poems about herdsmen. The name would then be a kind of *metonymia*, a *pars pro toto* approach to the whole collection. The other, more ingenious, explanation derives the name of the collection from the identification of Theocritus the poet with the pseudo-herdsman Simichidas of *Id.* 7. This would automatically turn all Theocritus' poetry into bucolic poetry, viz. poetry by a herdsman.[70] Although the simpler explanation is more compelling, it cannot be ruled out that perhaps both may have been true at different moments in time. A convoluted presentation playing with the implications of this equivocation of songs *by* or *about* herdsmen can indeed be found in *Id.* 1 and 7, the two poems generally recognized as programmatic for Theocritus' poetry. They are both bucolic poems which feature bucolic poets singing about ... bucolic poets.[71] This

[65] The name *Eidyllia* was given to the collection only later, in the *scholia*. On *testimonia* for ancient collections of Theocritus' poetry and their titles, see Gutzwiller (1996: 119–148).

[66] Cf. Nauta (1990: 121, n. 25): "*eine Analyse des Hellenistischen Gattungssystem (...) ist ein Desideratum*." Cf. also Harder's preface to *Genre in Hellenistic Poetry* (1998). Cf. Hunter (1999: 5); Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 1–17). On genre in general, see Harvey (1955: 157–175), Rossi (1971: 60–94), Zetzel (1983: 83–105). On the *contradictio in terminis* of the expression "new genre," see Gutzwiller (1991: 4).

[67] Except *Id.* 28–31, which are in lyric meters and use Aeolic dialectal forms.

[68] Cf. Stanzel (1998: 143–165).

[69] That is, without the intervention of a third person narrator.

[70] Nauta (1990: 117–137), cf. the (Byzantine) poem addressing the poet as a herdsman by the vocative Σιμιχίδα Θεόκριτε (Wendel 1914: 333). Earlier readers may have seen that Simichidas, often interpreted as alter ego of Theocritus in *Id.* 7, is not unambiguously a herdsman (he comes from town) but rather a poet posing as one cf. Giangrande (1968: 491–533).

[71] Cf. also Payne (2008: *passim*). As noted, Simichidas (*Id.* 7) is not unambiguously a

is a meaningful *mise en abyme*, as I will argue below. Furthermore, the circumstance that many of the poems are mimetic and not embedded in a narrative frame (1, 3, 4, 5, 10) blurs the distinction between the level of the poet (Theocritus) and his characters: these poems pretend to be direct reports of the songs of the rustics. Thus, they are indeed bucolic songs in both senses of the words.

If not a real genre, then, at least Theocritus created a new form or style of poetry in which he brought the theme of country-life, formerly only marginally treated in elevated poetry, to prominence.[72] However, he implies that this new poetry is really derived from Sicilian herdsmen (*Id.* 1, 5, 6, 7). While this is possibly partially true, the bucolic *Idylls* owe much to Greek literary tradition as well.[73] Therefore, Theocritus himself is the historical inventor of what came to be known as bucolic poetry. He fashioned this poetry from elements of high literature and low subject matter and influences from folk song. Yet, he contrives the impression of working in an age-old tradition with mythical predecessors, such as Daphnis, Comatas (*Id.* 7), and (to a lesser extent) the Cyclops Polyphemus, who are at the same time presented as traditional subjects of bucolic song. The following sections will undertake an inquiry into the credentials of the alleged mythological forebears of Theocritus' poetry and the way they are used to create the sense of tradition that his new poetry so obviously breathes.

herdsman, and his song is not bucolic, in that it does not deal with herdsmen. However, Lycidas in the same *Idyll* is unmistakably a herdsman and his song does treat singing herdsmen (Comatas, Daphnis). More on Lycidas and Simichidas in Ch. 6.

[72] Some more or less "pastoral" predecessors could be sought in Homer's Cyclops and Eumaeus; Stesichorus allegedly wrote on Daphnis (see next section); furthermore Eur. *Cyclops*, Old comedy (e.g. Cratinus' comedy *Goats*, fr. 14 Cock; passages from Aristophanes), passages from tragedy (e.g. Eur. *Antiope*, featuring the shepherd-musician Amphion, *Alexander*, in which Paris is a herdsman), Philoxenus' dithyramb *Cyclops or Galatea*, and the (lost) works of Philitas, allegedly Theocritus' teacher. Clearchus (third cent. BCE) mentions a certain Lycophronides, who wrote a dithyramb about a goatherd in love (Ath. 14.619c–d). Finally Sositheus, an Alexandrian dramatist (third cent. BCE) wrote *Lityerses*, a kind of satyr play involving Daphnis, a maiden kidnapped by a pirate, and Heracles (see Rosenmeyer 1969: 39, n. 36). There clearly were many poets working with pastoral subject matter, yet none of them wrote "bucolic poetry" proper.

[73] A much-debated topic, cf. e.g. Rosenmeyer (1969: 30–34) with bibliography. The evaluations range from "Theocritus' poetry is such as he might really have heard on the shores of Sicily," to "The raw desperadoes of the wilderness were not likely to furnish him with poetry." It seems impossible to deny any influence of folk-song, but the intrinsically literary and sophisticated character of Theocritean poetry must be remembered.

3.7. *Ancient Theories on the Origins of Bucolic Poetry*

The *scholia* to the *Idylls* are preceded by a late antique or Byzantine essay that attributes the invention of bucolic poetry to certain cults of Artemis in Laconia or Sicily.[74] This appears to have no basis in the surviving poetry of Theocritus, nor can Artemis or cultic *thiasoi* of bucolic initiates be found in any other later bucolic poetry. Nowadays, received opinion is that this theory was the scholarly response to the peripatetic explanation of the development of tragedy out of obscure rural cults.[75]

Other ancient explanations (usually post-Theocritean) singled out a mythical *prōtos heuretēs* for bucolic song; naturally, this would be a herdsman. The names encountered most frequently in this connection are Diomus, Menalcas and Daphnis.[76] Of these, the relation between Daphnis and Theocritus' *Idylls* is most important and complicated. Later writers tell aetiological stories about this legendary herdsman, for instance Diodorus Siculus:

> (…) μυθολογοῦσι γεννηθῆναι τὸν ὀνομαζόμενον Δάφνιν, Ἑρμοῦ μὲν καὶ Νύμφης υἱόν, ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ πλήθους καὶ τῆς πυκνότητος τῆς φυομένης δάφνης ὠνομάσθαι Δάφνιν. τοῦτον δ' ὑπὸ Νυμφῶν τραφέντα, καὶ βοῶν ἀγέλας παμπληθεῖς κεκτημένον, τούτων ποιεῖσθαι πολλὴν ἐπιμέλειαν· ἀφ' ἧς αἰτίας βουκόλον αὐτὸν ὀνομασθῆναι. φύσει δὲ διαφόρῳ πρὸς εὐμέλειαν κεχορηγημένον ἐξευρεῖν τὸ βουκολικὸν ποίημα καὶ μέλος, ὃ μέχρι τοῦ νῦν κατὰ τὴν Σικελίαν τυγχάνει διαμένον ἐν ἀποδοχῇ. μυθολογοῦσι δὲ τὸν Δάφνιν μετὰ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος κυνηγεῖν ὑπηρετοῦντα τῇ θεῷ κεχαρισμένως, καὶ διὰ τῆς σύριγγος καὶ βουκολικῆς μελῳδίας τέρπειν αὐτὴν διαφερόντως. λέγουσι δ' αὐτοῦ μίαν τῶν Νυμφῶν

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[74] Wendel (1914: 2) *Prolegomena* B. These accounts formed the basis for Reitzenstein's idea of the bucolic masquerade (1893: 233–234).

[75] See Hunter (1999: 6, n. 20) for bibliography on the critical consensus.

[76] Halperin (1983: 80). Diomus is referred to in Ath. (14.619ab) as a character in a play by Epicharmus (the fifth cent. BCE Sicilian comic poet). The βουκολιασμός mentioned in connection with him was apparently a kind of song sung by herdsmen. It is impossible to establish if there is a connection between this Diomus-figure and Theocritean herdsmen. The information only shows that singing herdsmen were not alien to Sicilian literary tradition. The shepherd Menalcas, according to Clearchus of Soloi, a contemporary of Theocritus was loved by a lyric poetess, Eriphanis who pursued him singing, "High are the oaks, Menalcas," (Ath. 14.619c–d) giving rise to bucolic song. It is unclear whence Clearchus derives this information. This may well have been his invention, but, in any case, the story attests once more to the interest in the origins of bucolic at Theocritus' time.

> ἐρασθεῖσαν προειπεῖν, ἐὰν ἄλλῃ τινὶ πλησιάσῃ, στερήσεσθαι τῆς ὁράσεως· κἀκεῖνον ὑπό τινος θυγατρὸς βασιλέως καταμεθυσθέντα, καὶ πλησιάσαντα αὐτῇ, στερηθῆναι τῆς ὁράσεως κατὰ τὴν γεγενημένην ὑπὸ τῆς Νύμφης πρόρρησιν. (4.84.3–5)
>
> They tell the legend that [in that place] the man named Daphnis was born, a son of Hermes and a nymph and that he was named Daphnis after the great amount of thick laurel that grew there. He was brought up by the nymphs and acquired enormous herds of cows and was greatly concerned with them, which is why he was called "The Cowherd." Being by nature favored with an extraordinary talent for music, he invented the bucolic poem and melody, which, up to the present day, is present as a tradition they received from him. And they tell that this Daphnis went hunting with Artemis, gladly helping the goddess and that he pleased her exceedingly with his Syrinx and his bucolic song. They also say that one of the nymphs who fell in love with him foretold that he would be robbed of his sight if he ever made love to another woman. And indeed, made drunk by a daughter of some king and having made love to her, he was robbed of his sight according to the prophecy of the nymph.

A similar story is told by Aelian, who continues:

> ἐκ δὲ τούτου τὰ βουκολικὰ μέλη πρῶτον ᾔσθη, καὶ εἶχεν ὑπόθεσιν τὸ πάθος τὸ κατὰ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ. καὶ Στησίχορόν γε τὸν Ἱμεραῖον τῆς τοιαύτης μελοποιίας ὑπάρξασθαι. (*VH* 10.18)
>
> As a result of this, bucolic song was sung for the first time and its subject was what happened to his eyes. Stesichorus of Himera (*PMG* fr. 279) began this kind of lyric.

The meaning of these last phrases is not clear.[77] Do they imply that Daphnis sang his own lament and Stesichorus made it into a subject for his own poetry or that others sang about Daphnis before Stesichorus wrote a poem about it?[78] Whatever the more likely interpretation, bucolic poetry was probably assigned two fountainheads in this passage: a mythological one in Daphnis and a historical one in Stesichorus. Once again, the distinction between poetry about herdsmen and poetry by herdsmen is blurred. As Halperin remarks *à propos* of such stories:

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[77] Cf. Dover (1971: lxv), Hunter (1999: 65). Halperin interprets the verb ὑπάρξασθαι as "to inherit" (1983: 79).

[78] Or perhaps Stesichorus sang of how he lost *his own* eyesight, as was related in connection with the *Palinode about Helen* (fr. 15, 16 *PMG*), cf. Pl. *Phaedr.* 243a5?

> [They] are most plausibly viewed in the context of the Greek habit of searching out mythological precedents for all existing social and literary institutions, a habit whose effect begins to be felt at a very early date in Greek culture.[79]

Clearly, there was a decided interest in aetiological stories about the origins of bucolic poetry in the Hellenistic period, and a post-Hellenistic tradition connecting Daphnis (and other Sicilian herdsmen) with these origins. It is worthy of note that the important character of the goatherd Comatas, who is sung of by Lycidas in the seventh *Idyll* as a legendary singer, is not mentioned in this enquiry into the origins of bucolic song. Does this imply that he is Theocritus' invention?[80] With this question at the back of our minds, an attempt to explore Theocritus' stance regarding the origins of bucolic poetry may be undertaken.

3.8. *Daphnis in* Idyll *1*

As is generally recognized, *Idylls* 1 and 7 seem to propose a meta-poetic enquiry into the nature of bucolic poetry.[81] *Idyll* 1 is a mime set in a timeless pastoral landscape (in all likelihood on Sicily)[82] in which two herdsmen exchange compliments, gifts, and songs. The bucolic song is performed by the shepherd Thyrsis, who "is wont to sing the woes of Daphnis and is come to mastery in bucolic song," according to his interlocutor, the nameless goatherd (19–20). This implies that the sufferings of Daphnis were an established subject of song (it almost sounds like a title) and that bucolic song was a broadly practiced form in which Thyrsis has reached mastery. It is important to keep this in mind in the ensuing discussion of the song of Thyrsis.

Thyrsis' song is framed by a changing refrain calling on the Muses to begin, continue, and end the bucolic song (ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς / πάλιν ἄρχετ' / λήγετε ἀοιδᾶς, 64–142). Above, the version of the story of Daphnis as it has come down in tradition has been discussed, in which the

[79] Cf. Hunter (1999: 67): "In the Hellenistic age, traditional tales, like the story of Daphnis, were commonly fashioned into aetiologies for ritual practice; bucolic song is the recurrent commemoration of the pathos of Daphnis ..." Cf. Hobsbawm's definition (1983: 7) of the function of "invented tradition."

[80] The *scholia* are contradictory on this point, cf. below.

[81] See on this topic in particular Seeck (1975: 195–211), Cairns (1984: 89–113), Goldhill (1991: 225–240), Hunter (1999: 148–149).

[82] Cf. *Id.* 1.65, and allusions to geographical points of reference in Thyrsis' song, *passim*.

cowherd Daphnis is untrue to a nymph to whom he has made a vow of chastity and as a result is punished with blindness and somehow dies. It is, however, remarkably unclear whether this is the version in the first *Idyll*. Despite assurances to the contrary,[83] the song in this poem is told in an allusive way and hard to comprehend fully.[84] The main difficulties involved center around the questions of how and why Daphnis met his end.

Before addressing these, the way the narrative is recounted in Thyrsis' song must be considered. The introduction to the story recounts how Daphnis was "wasting away" (ἐτάκετο, 66), a phrase which triggers the expectation that he was languishing from the pangs of unrequited love.[85] It is then related how, before he died, gods and men came to enquire into the cause of his suffering and offered help, commiseration, or comment upon it. The series of visitors who came to see Daphnis represents a range of understanding: complete ignorance as to what causes Daphnis' suffering (humans, who ask what the matter is, 80–81), to inference (Hermes: "With whom are you so in love?" 77–78), assumption (Priapus: "You are awkward in love (δύσερως); the girl is looking for you but you do not go to her," 82–93) and (apparent) knowledge (Aphrodite: "You said you would vanquish Eros, but now he has vanquished you," 97–98). Aphrodite's remarks are also singled out by the fact that Daphnis deigns to answer only when addressed by her. It would seem the matter is really between these two, who appear to stand on a familiar footing and know a great deal about each other's affairs. After this, Daphnis "went to the stream and the waters closed over his head" (140–141).

There are three possible explanations for the difficulties encountered when trying to square Theocritus' reading with the account of post-Hellenistic tradition: 1) *Id.* 1 more or less follows the tradition represented by Aelian and Diodorus, but in an obscure way; 2) Theocritus follows a now unknown variant tradition that was either known or unknown to most of his contemporaries; 3) Theocritus has made up a new story on the basis of the legendary Sicilian character Daphnis,[86] which was either fully comprehensible or incomprehensible to a contemporary audience.

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[83] Lawall (1967: 26–27).

[84] Gow (1952: II, 1), Ogilvie (1962: 106–110). Recently, with different conclusions Goldhill (1991: 242–243), Hunter (1999: 67).

[85] Cf. other instances of the verb, e.g. in Theoc. *Id.* 2.29; 82.

[86] Like his contemporaries Hermesianax (*schol. ad Id.* 8.93) and Sositheus (Servius *ad Verg. Ecl.* 8.68).

Apart from Ogilvie, practically no scholars embrace the first hypothesis; indeed, it has little to recommend itself and can be discarded here.[87] The other two demand closer inspection. In particular, the likelihood that contemporary audiences would, in these cases, have been able to grasp the song of Thyrsis in all its detail needs to be weighed, as it has obvious consequences for the analysis of Theocritus' presentation of bucolic tradition.

In the narrative Theocritus presents, there are two possible readings of the visits of men and gods; the choice between them dictates whether this narrative can be understood on its own terms, even if it does not conform to the traditional account. One interpretation takes every utterance of the gods at face value. This is the reading proposed by Lawall (1967), who sees in Daphnis a kind of bucolic Hippolytus determined to remain chaste, even in the face of (his own) consuming passion.[88] Even if this interpretation is correct, comparison with the other versions shows that this was not, in any case the *traditional* account. Lawall's appraisal is based on the assumption that Priapus' remark, that "the girl" (ἁ κώρα, 82) is looking for Daphnis, is correct. Since Daphnis does not reply to Priapus' remarks and Hermes is not aware of any details of the situation, there is no compelling reason to assume that this is in fact so. Even if he should be correct: who is "the girl?" Is she the nymph to whom Daphnis pledged faithfulness? The princess who seduced him? Another (mortal/immortal) girl he is in love with but cannot or will not be with? And what does Aphrodite's statement that Daphnis had vowed "to vanquish Eros" refer to in combination with this girl? Of course, all kinds of explanations can be crafted to fit all kinds of mythical parallels, even perhaps the one later represented in Diodorus and Aelian, but that is the point: which of these vaguely familiar stories is being related? Finally, what happens when Daphnis dies also remains ambiguous:

(...) τά γε μὰν λίνα πάντα λελοίπει
ἐκ Μοιρᾶν, χὠ Δάφνις ἔβα ῥόον. ἔκλυσε δίνα
τὸν Μοίσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ. (1.139–141)

[87] Ogilvie (1962: 106–110). Ogilvie's reading is forced on a number of points. In the first place, he fails to recognize the role of Aphrodite, whom he denies is guilty of Daphnis' sufferings. Another point is his forced reading of δύσερως (1.85) as "in love with the wrong object" and not "cursed in love, gauche." This finds no echo in the use in Theocritus' other *Idylls* (6.6–7). On the Theocritean *topos* of the δύσερως goatherd, see Stanzel (1995: 48–50).

[88] Cf. Hutchinson (1988: 149).

> But all the thread the Fates assigned was run, and Daphnis went to the stream. The waters closed over him whom the Muses loved, nor did the Nymphs dislike him. (transl. Gow)

Various explanations, once more, have been provided to clarify this mysterious reference. Does Daphnis drown himself (by accident or on purpose)? Does the angry (water) nymph drown him?[89] Does he change (melt away) into a river or fountain, like his fellow countryman Acis?[90] Or is "the river" an unusual way of referring to the river of the dead, the Acheron?[91] Without wanting to discuss the likelihood of these suggestions, it is clear that interpreting this song is a complicated matter. Yet, in the *Idyll* itself, there is no sign that the goatherd, the interlocutor and audience of Thyrsis, has any difficulty understanding the account. Indeed, as pointed out earlier, he seems perfectly familiar with it (cf. 1.19).

This, then, leads to the other reading, the one that accepts that "Theocritus has veiled the whole story in a cloak of allusive obscurity."[92] Taking stock of the difficulties in making the story (which seems so provokingly familiar) into a fitting one, it seems plausible that Theocritus wanted his readers to be tantalized by this allusive account of Daphnis' story. Given the way the Daphnis narrative is poetically balanced by the *ekphrasis* of the goatherd's cup ("too much" information[93] against "too little" information), this idea begins to look even more attractive.[94] The possibilities that either Theocritus invented the story himself or used a little known variant of the myth remain. Even in the latter case, the majority of his ancient audience would not have been familiar with this recondite Sicilian lore, so this distinction is minor. But what was Theocritus'

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89 Like Hylas in 13? So e.g. Prescott (1899: 121–140).

90 Cf. Zimmerman (1994: 133), who compares Daphnis to a kind of liquefying Narcissus, cf. Hunter (1999: 67).

91 This may well be the right interpretation. Van Erp Taalman Kip (1987: 249–251) points out that in 1.71 Daphnis is explicitly said to be dead, when the animals come to mourn at his feet, so he cannot have walked to the stream. For the unusual reference to Acheron, see the parallels adduced by Gow (1952: II, *ad loc*).

92 Phrasing Ogilvie (1962: 108); so e.g. Gow (1952: II, 1), Hunter (1999: 67). Segal (1981: 36): "Such a distortion of the myth in a poet as learned and sophisticated as Theocritus cannot but be intentional. The effect of departing from the received legend while subtly hinting at it, as Priapus' speech seems to do, forces the reader to explore further. The very mystery of Daphnis' end may be the most essential element in the poem."

93 In particular the description of the woman and the two young men (1.33–37), which, in the typical mode of *ekphrasis*, describes things that are strictly speaking, invisible.

94 Cf. e.g. Goldhill (1991: 142), Hunter (1999: 62–63).

motivation for relating the story, or, rather, having Thyrsis relate it, in such an allusive way? Looking for parallels is the best way to find an answer to this question.

3.9. *Allusive Narrative in Ancient Poetry*

It is revealing to consider allusive narratives known from other ancient poetry. Frequent examples can be found, for example, in the choral lyric of Pindar.[95] One of the many is the following, in which Hieron I, tyrant of Syracuse, is compared to Philoctetes:

> φαντὶ δὲ Λαμνόθεν ἕλκει
> τειρόμενον μεταβάσοντας ἐλθεῖν
> ἥρωας ἀντιθέους Ποίαντος υἱὸν τοξόταν·
> ὃς Πριάμοιο πόλιν πέρσεν, τελεύτα-
> σέν τε πόνους Δαναοῖς,
> ἀσθενεῖ μὲν χρωτὶ βαίνων, ἀλλὰ μοιρίδιον ἦν. (*P.* 1.52–55)

> They tell that the godlike heroes came to fetch him from Lemnos, wasting from his wound, Poias' archer son, who destroyed Priam's city and ended the Danaans' toils, he walked with flesh infirm, but it was the work of destiny. (transl. Race)

Without awareness of the story of Philoctetes, the reader must wonder why he was wounded and how, what his relation to Lemnos was, and how he (with only his bow) destroyed the city of Priam. The great difference between this allusive narrative and the one in the first *Idyll* is its familiarity. Not many in ancient Greece would have been ignorant of the basic elements of the myth of Philoctetes. Of course, examples of Pindar's tendency to adapt or manipulate a well-known story to fit his own purposes, as he does in *O.* 1.35–41 concerning the story of Tantalus and his son, have also survived. The fact remains that the audience could be expected to appreciate Pindar's additions or conversions, despite or perhaps rather because of their knowledge of the main line of the famous narrative. Indeed, Pindar sometimes explicitly calls the reader's attention to the fact that he is deviating from the traditional version of the myth:

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[95] Cf. Pi. *I.* 4.36–39 (the death of Ajax): ἴστε μάν / Αἴαντος ἀλκάν, φοίνιον τὰν ὀψίᾳ / ἐν νυκτὶ ταμὼν περὶ ᾧ φασγάνῳ μομφὰν ἔχει / παίδεσσιν Ἑλλάνων ὅσοι Τροίανδ' ἔβαν. (Surely you know of Ajax' bloodstained valor, which he pierced late at night on his own sword, and thereby cast blame upon all the sons of the Hellenes who went to Troy. transl. Race).

"Son of Tantalus, I shall tell your story contrary to my predecessors ..." (υἱὲ Ταντάλου, σὲ δ' ἀντία προτέρων φθέγξομαι, *O.* 1.36).[96]

How do these examples compare to the narrative in *Idyll* 1? As pointed out, the audience of Thyrsis (the goatherd) within the text apparently experiences no difficulties of comprehension (cf. 1.19), while the modern reader does. Neither is the reader (ancient or modern) alerted to the possibility that this is a variant of a traditional tale. It must be taken for granted that (at least within the fiction of the poem) this is a similar situation to the one I described with regard to Pindar *P.* 1. In other words, the reader is invited to believe that an age-old myth familiar to the rural world is being recounted. The lack of detail underscores the impression of the venerable antiquity and familiarity of a story in which the particulars need no repeating. While the story of Daphnis in Theocritus' version therefore may be relatively new,[97] it is in this way subtly provided with credentials implying that *there was a traditional version*. It sounds familiar despite the elusive details. Theocritus' ancient readers, in asking themselves why they could not understand this story, would in all likelihood have assumed that it was because they were not part of the same rural community to which the herdsmen belong.

The technique used in *Id.* 1, pretending there is an established, ancient version of the (recent/made up) story one is telling, is not entirely unprecedented; Pindar[98] and Plato[99] use similar means for authenticating and authorizing newly invented stories.[100] Within Theocritus' own poetry, the best parallel can be found in *Id.* 22, where the story of the Dioscuri is told in a version markedly different from earlier known traditions: Castor and Polydeuces both survive the fight with Idas and Lynceus, whereas they do not, or at least not both, in all other extant versions.[101] In the *envoi*, Homer is indirectly adduced as the authority for tales about heroes in general and the Dioscuri in particular (22.216–

[96] Cf. Pi. *O.* 9.35–40; *N.* 7.22–27; 8.32–37; Stesich. *Palinode* (fr. 15, 16 *PMG*).

[97] The only candidate for an older version appears to be Stesichorus, but the details in Ael. *VH* 10.18 suggest that he told a different version.

[98] E.g. Pi. *O.* 7.54–57, a new account of the origins of the Isle of Rhodes, attributed to "the ancient reports of men."

[99] E.g. Pl. *Tim.* 21a: "Having heard an old story from a man who was not young."

[100] Cf. Pfeijffer (2004: 221), with reference to Verdenius (1987: 74). Call. fr. 612 Pf. (ἀμάρτυρον οὐδὲν ἀείδω, I sing nothing without testimony) might be an ironic reference to this practice.

[101] E.g. Pi. *N.* 10, Cypria fr. 8 (Bernabé) and *Il.* 3.236–244. Cf. Gow (1952: II, 383–384), Sens (1997: *ad* 210–211). See on this passage further Ch. 8.7.3.

219).[102] Remarkably, however, in Homer's *Iliad*, the Dioscuri are explicitly dead and buried (*Il.* 3.236–244), presumably because of their fight with Idas and Lynceus. Rather than attributing this discrepancy to an "unfortunate" mistake on the part of Theocritus, like Gow, it is better to say that Theocritus wants his own poetical treatment of the Dioscuri to be contrasted with the brief handling they receive in the *Iliad*.[103] In the process, he ironically pretends to be deriving the authority for his tale from a venerable source, namely Homer. This looks similar to the story of Daphnis as told by Thyrsis in *Id.* 1. Although it is not explicitly traced back to ancient sources, as in the examples from Pindar, Plato, and *Id.* 22, the context certainly implies that it is a classic of the rustic world.[104]

3.10. *Daphnis in the Other* Idylls

Starting from the assumption that Theocritus' poems were read *as a book* in antiquity, in which cross-reference was an important hermeneutic tool for the comprehension of single poems,[105] a natural step would be a closer look at more references to the story of Daphnis in the *Idylls* that also presuppose knowledge of his fate.

The first is a brief one in *Id.* 5, where a certain Lacon, one of two bickering goatherds (presumably imagined as contemporaries of Theocritus),[106] says: "The troubles of Daphnis fall on me if I believe you" (αἴ τοι πιστεύσαιμι, τὰ Δάφνιδος ἄλγε' ἀροίμαν, *Id.* 5.20). Clearly both herdsmen know to which unpleasant event this refers, so the reference presumably functions as a proverbial expression. Later, the other herdsman Comatas declares, "The Muses love me much better than the singer Daphnis" (ταὶ Μοῖσαί με φιλεῦντι πολὺ πλέον ἢ τὸν ἀοιδόν / Δάφνιν, *Id.* 5.79–80), once more suggesting a proverbial expression.

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[102] The idea that Theocritus here refers to the (short) *Homeric Hymns* concerning the Dioscuri, or the (non-Homeric) *Cypria*, rather than to the *Iliad* is unattractive, cf. Sens (1997: 218–219).

[103] Hutchinson (1988: 163, n. 33). For an overview of other explanations, none of them particularly convincing, see Sens (1997: 219).

[104] For the idea that the "fragmentation" of the Daphnis narrative "hints towards a pastoral world" (without however elaborating on what this entails), cf. Goldhill (1991: 242).

[105] Gutzwiller (1996: 119–148).

[106] They do not represent mythical figures; cf. the reference to Thurii (72), a colony that was founded in the fifth century BCE.

The third reference appears in *Id.* 7, when Lycidas, a goatherd/poet who is represented as a contemporary of Theocritus,[107] sings how Tityrus, a rustic musician, will sing of Daphnis:

(…) ὁ δὲ Τίτυρος ἐγγύθεν ᾀσεῖ
ὥς ποκα τᾶς Ξενέας ἠράσσατο Δάφνις ὁ βούτας,
χὠς ὄρος ἀμφεπονεῖτο καὶ ὡς δρύες αὐτὸν ἐθρήνευν
Ἱμέρα αἵτε φύοντι παρ' ὄχθαισιν ποταμοῖο,
εὖτε χιὼν ὥς τις κατετάκετο μακρὸν ὑφ' Αἷμον
ἢ Ἄθω ἢ Ῥοδόπαν ἢ Καύκασον ἐσχατόωντα. (7.72–77)

And close at hand Tityrus shall sing how once Daphnis the neatherd loved Xenea, and how the hill was sorrowful about him and the oaktrees which grow upon the river Himeras' banks sang his dirge when he was wasting like any snow under high Haemus or Athos or Rhodope or remotest Caucasus. (transl. Gow)

Once more, only snatches of the story are accessible: Daphnis' "wasting," his love for the girl, here called Xenea, and the grief (Sicilian) nature showed at his suffering. The temptation to combine the information found here with that of *Id.* 1 could not be greater, but it does not add up to a clearer picture of events.[108] All that it confirms is that the story is well known to Tityrus, Lycidas, and presumably also to Simichidas, who is after all the audience of Lycidas' song in *Id.* 7 and shows no problems of comprehension. Moreover, the setting of this *Idyll* on Cos in the eastern Mediterranean and not in Sicily implies the widespread familiarity of the song among rustic singers.[109] With the help of tantalizing and allusive cross-references, the *Idylls* thus manage to convey the illusion of a fully rounded bucolic world endowed with its own traditions and cultures that are well known to its inhabitants. In this way, Theocritus provides his poetic creation with credibility and a sense of tradition. The Daphnis myth is particularly suitable to this venture, drawing as it does on a possibly pre-existent yet at any rate largely unfamiliar myth.

A different case, however, is the other theme of Tityrus' imagined song, the legendary goatherd-musician Comatas:

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[107] Cf. the references to Philitas and Asclepiades (7.40), poets slightly older than Theocritus.

[108] *Pace* Ogilvie (1962: 106–110).

[109] Cf. Dover (1971: lxiv), noting moreover the Cydonian (i.e. Cretan) origin of Lycidas. He suggests Theocritus is implicitly paying himself a compliment and compares this to the fact that in Call. *AP* 7.518 Cretan herdsmen sing of Daphnis' fate; this would constitute a compliment by Callimachus to Theocritus.

ᾀσεῖ δ' ὥς ποκ' ἔδεκτο τὸν αἰπόλον εὐρέα λάρναξ
ζωὸν ἐόντα κακαῖσιν ἀτασθαλίαισιν ἄνακτος,
ὥς τέ νιν αἱ σιμαὶ λειμωνόθε φέρβον ἰοῖσαι
κέδρον ἐς ἁδεῖαν μαλακοῖς ἄνθεσσι μέλισσαι,
οὕνεκά οἱ γλυκὺ Μοῖσα κατὰ στόματος χέε νέκταρ.
ὦ μακαριστὲ Κομᾶτα, τύ θην τάδε τερπνὰ πεπόνθεις·
καὶ τὺ κατεκλᾴσθης ἐς λάρνακα, καὶ τὺ μελισσᾶν
κηρία φερβόμενος ἔτος ὥριον ἐξεπόνασας.
αἴθ' ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ζωοῖς ἐναρίθμιος ὤφελες ἦμεν,
ὥς τοι ἐγὼν ἐνόμευον ἀν' ὤρεα τὰς καλὰς αἶγας
φωνᾶς εἰσαΐων, τὺ δ' ὑπὸ δρυσὶν ἢ ὑπὸ πεύκαις
ἁδὺ μελισδόμενος κατεκέκλισο, θεῖε Κομᾶτα. (7.78–89)

And he shall sing how once a wide coffer received the goatherd alive by the impious presumption of a king; and how the blunt-faced bees came from the meadows to the fragrant chest of cedar and fed him on tender flowers because the Muse had poured sweet nectar on his lips. Ah, blessed Comatas, yours is this sweet lot, you too were closed within the coffer; you too, fed on honeycomb, did endure with toil the springtime of the year. Would that you had been numbered with the living in my day so that I might have herded your fair goats upon the hills, and listened to your voice, while you, divine Comatas did lie under the oaks or pines, and made sweet music. (transl. Gow adapted)

Who is this Comatas?[110] Apparently, he is another mythical singer of bucolic poetry, a legendary rustic character closely linked to the Muses. He is primarily an example of how music and herdsmen are intimately related, illustrating the essentiality of music for the herdsmen's life: his own life was saved by it through a miracle of nature. In this sense he looks like a foil to Daphnis, who could not be saved, even by music, no matter what miracles nature generated at his death.[111]

Although Comatas' name is not attested elsewhere, the *scholia ad* 79c are aware of a story closely resembling what is found here and attribute it to a certain Lycus of Rhegium, a local historiographer.[112] However, this

[110] I do not agree with Radt (1971: 254–255) and Hunter (1999: 176), who, based on the recurrent καί (84), think "the goatherd" (78) and "Comatas" refer to two distinct individuals. The connection (καί) is rather between Comatas and *Daphnis*, who was apparently also exposed in a chest and fed by bees (cf. *schol. ad* 83), or between Comatas and other examples from myth (Danae was closed in a chest, Iamos, son of Euadne was fed by bees; cf. Dover *ad* 83). Gow (1952: II *ad* 83) also takes "the goatherd" to refer to Comatas.

[111] This opposition will be treated below in the final interpretation of the figures of Daphnis, Comatas, and Polyphemus and their interrelations.

[112] *Schol. ad* 78/9 b, cf. the discussions of Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*), Dover (1971) and Hunter (1999: *ad loc.*).

is in opposition to the remarks in *schol. ad* 78/79a and 83 to the effect that Theocritus has "made this story up himself" (πέπλασται τὰ περὶ τοῦ Κομάτα ὑπὸ Θεοκρίτου, 83) or has "transferred" (μετήνεγκεν, 79c) "elements of the Daphnis-legend to it" (καθάπερ ὁ Δάφνις ἱστορεῖται, 83). Once more then, the story is an obscure variant of a local myth (at best) or, alternatively, an invented story formed out of familiar mythical elements presented as traditional lore, supposedly well known to the audience within the bucolic world of the poem.[113] The proximity of the story of Daphnis, who may have had a somewhat wider familiarity, provides the tale of Comatas with greater credibility.

3.11. *Daphnis and Comatas*

Related to the tantalizing recurrent allusions to Daphnis addressed above, the recurrence of identical names is a puzzling and often remarked upon characteristic that connects many of the *Idylls*.[114] Is the mythical cowherd Daphnis in *Id.* 1 identical to the (contemporary?) cowherd Daphnis in *Id.* 6,[115] described as a young boy "with half-grown beard" (2–3)? Similarly, the goatherd Comatas in Lycidas' song in *Id.* 7 seems a legendary, even divine, figure close to the Muses, while the goatherd Comatas in *Id.* 5 is involved in a vulgar shouting match. Yet, are they the same?[116] The recurrent names, I submit, are not coincidences that demonstrate a lack of fantasy on the part of Theocritus but serve as a way to provide unity.[117] To understand this, it is important to remember that Theocritus is often interested in the fate of his mythical protagonists "before they entered traditional myth." This can be seen in the case of young Polyphemus (*Id.* 6 and 11 recount an episode before book 9 of the

[113] Cf. Wilamowitz (1924: II, 14): "*Die Komatasgeschichte war den Zuhörern Theokrits vermutlich neu.*"

[114] See e.g. Wilamowitz (1906: 136), Lawall (1967: esp. 69), Ott (1969: 121), Dover (1971: lvi and 140), Schmidt (1987), Bernsdorff (1994: 40), who is uncertain about *Id.* 5; Stanzel (1995: 40–41), Hunter (1999: 245), who only sees Daphnis of 1 and 6 as identical, not Comatas of 5 and 7. Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*) is silent on the subject, but appears to assume the identity of Daphnis in *Id.* 1 and 6, if not of Comatas in *Id.* 5 and 7.

[115] He is explicitly called "The cowherd" (ὁ βουκόλος) in 6.1; 86; 113; 116; 120–121.

[116] To these examples, which are the most interesting to the discussion, could be added Amaryllis (serenaded by the shepherd in 3 and referred to as dead in 4.36–40); Aratus (the addressee of *Id.* 6 and referred to in Simichidas' song in *Id.* 7 as an unhappy lover).

[117] With regard to Daphnis, esp. Bernsdorff (1994: 38–51) and Hunter (1999: 245); with regard to Comatas esp. Schmidt (1987); this identification has found no wide acceptance.

Odyssey, when he is in love with Galatea "with the down on his lips," cf. *Id.* 6.2–3) and in the wedding song for that soon-to-be notorious young couple Helen and Menelaus (18). It is therefore not unlikely that Daphnis in *Id.* 6 is the same Daphnis as the one in *Id.* 1, only before his sufferings befell him. The interpretation that identifies Daphnis of *Id.* 1 with the singer in *Id.* 6 is made even more attractive by considerations of content. There are numerous thematic correspondences between *Id.* 1 and *Id.* 6. Whereas Daphnis in *Id.* 6 plays the role of giver of advice in amorous matters to Polyphemus, in *Id.* 1 he is himself a victim of love; *Id.* 6, with Cyclops playing hard to get, is a comic reflection of the (apparently) self-imposed and fatal abstinence of the lovelorn Daphnis in *Id.* 1.[118]

Along the same lines, it has been argued that the "divine poet" Comatas in *Id.* 7 (whose origins are unclear and, in all likelihood, lie at least partly in Theocritean invention) is identical to the foulmouthed goatherd/slave with that name in *Id.* 5.[119] This latter identification, however, has not found wide acceptance because of the discrepancy between a divine singer and a foulmouthed pederast.[120] Although indeed it is not as convincing as the case of Daphnis, the recurring name is nonetheless significant. It might be argued that the two versions of Comatas possess the complementary aspects which taken together make up the essence of bucolic poetry. In this, they are like many of Theocritus' character-couples: Daphnis is a tragic lover, Polyphemus his comic counterpart; Lycidas' song in *Id.* 7 is full of deep feeling and melancholy; Simichidas' song is harsh and derisive.[121] Likewise, the single name "Comatas" comes to bear a double meaning: it represents both the elevated legendary goatherd and the down-to earth contemporary one. In this, it is indeed symbolic of bucolic poetry, which derives much of its distinctive character from the (often surprising) clash of such opposites.

Theocritus' way of referring to time in the *Idylls* helps blur the distinctions between mythical herdsmen and their contemporary counterparts. The difficulty in ascertaining whether Thyrsis in *Id.* 1 and Daphnis in *Id.* 6

[118] This furthermore implies that *Id.* 1 is linked to *Id.* 11 by way of *Id.* 6, cf. Hunter (1996: 245–248), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 150–151).

[119] Schmidt (1987) makes a case for the identification. Segal already pointed to the possibility (1981: 36).

[120] E.g. Stanzel (1995: 43): "*Von der Personenzeichnung des fünften Eidyllions her scheint es mir jedenfalls nicht gerechtfertigt, das Attribut göttlich aus dem siebten Gedicht auf diesen Hirten zu übertragen.*"

[121] For the creative principle of combining opposites in bucolic poetry, cf. Ott (1969).

are mythical or contemporary herdsmen also arises from the vagueness of Theocritus' indications of absolute and relative chronology.[122] When present, the majority of such indications belong to the category "once" (πότε, πόκα, ἦς χρόνος ἁνίκ'), which does not refer to an equidistant past.[123] Many of the mimes moreover lack a narrative frame that could anchor them to any particular period (e.g. *Id.* 1 and 3).

A second reason for the semblance of timelessness in Theocritus' bucolic world is the general lack of references to historical, political, or mundane events that would allow the dramatic date of the poems to be fixed.[124] Against a background of unchanging nature and the unchanging ways of the countryside, the adventures of unchanging herdsmen are narrated. This exemption from the passage of time must be the reason for the deliberate chronological vagueness of the *Idylls*: it does not greatly matter whether the events narrated occurred in Theocritus' day and age or in an unspecified mythological past thousand years earlier. In the world of herdsmen nothing much changes; the rustic world is a continuum.

3.12. *A World of Song*

So how does this web of recurring personages and the overall impression of timelessness affect the way in which Theocritus positions his bucolic poetry in literary history? Considering the lack of temporal differentiation, the question of the identification of the herdsmen Daphnis and Comatas in *Id.* 1, 6, 5, and 7 can be seen from a new angle; it does not greatly matter whether they are exactly identical, as they are, at any rate, greatly alike. Mythical and contemporary Theocritean herdsmen inhabit a curiously atemporal and unchanging continuum in which the constant factors determining human life are love and song. This implies that poetry about this world is automatically a poetry close to origins. Thus,

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[122] Cf. Klooster (2007: 97–115).

[123] In *Id.* 7, "there was a time when" (ἦς χρόνος ἁνίκ') refers to an episode within the lifetime of the narrator, Simichidas, who is firmly situated in Theocritus' contemporary world by his references to Asclepiades and Philitas (39–40). Whereas πόκ' in 18.1 (the epithalamium of Helen) refers to the heroic times just before the outbreak of the Trojan War, it remains unclear whether πότε in *Id.* 6.2 refers to the age of heroic legend or not. More remarks on the expression below, Ch. 7.4.

[124] Stanzel (1995: 38–44). The exceptions have already been mentioned, viz. the references to Thurii (5.70) and to Philitas and Asclepiades (7.40).

Polyphemus in *Id.* 11 is hardly different from Bucaeus in *Id.* 10, or from Theocritus the poet and his contemporary addressees in this respect, a thought that is worded most memorably in the address to Nicias in *Id.* 13:[125]

> Οὐχ ἁμῖν τὸν Ἔρωτα μόνοις ἔτεχ', ὡς ἐδοκεῦμες,
> Νικία, ᾧτινι τοῦτο θεῶν ποκα τέκνον ἔγεντο·
> οὐχ ἁμῖν τὰ καλὰ πράτοις καλὰ φαίνεται ἦμεν,
> οἳ θνατοὶ πελόμεσθα, τὸ δ' αὔριον οὐκ ἐσορῶμες· (1–4)
>
> Not for us alone, Nicias, as once we thought, was Love begotten by whosoever of the gods begat him, nor does fair seem fair first to us, who are mortal and see not the morrow …
> (transl. Gow; the poem continues to describe the love of Heracles for the beautiful Hylas, an example from the heroic age.)

Theocritus then, represents himself and his contemporaries as similar, at least in this respect, to the characters he represents in his poems. This collapsing of different levels of the poem (of author and personage, of the question whether bucolic poetry is poetry by herdsmen or about herdsmen) is brought about in many other ways besides. Thus in *Id.* 1, Thyrsis, the bucolic master, sings of *Daphnis*, the original subject/singer of bucolic song. In *Id.* 7, Lycidas, the modern bucolic poet and, of course, a character of Theocritus' own bucolic poetry, sings of Tityrus, who also sings of *Daphnis* and of Comatas, another subject/singer of bucolic song. He even wishes Comatas might have been alive in his own day. In *Id.* 6, Theocritus the poet sings of *Daphnis*. In this respect then, he is like Thyrsis and Lycidas. He is even very like Lycidas in another respect: both sing songs about herdsmen singing songs about herdsmen.

This Chinese-box effect dazzles the reader and results in blurring the distinction between the narrating voices.[126] In the mimetic *Id.* 5, moreover, Theocritus presents the character *Comatas* as if he were among the living; he at once makes the wish of Lycidas (*Id.* 7) come true and is himself like Lycidas in the choice of his topic. The fact that he is able to imagine what Comatas would be like if he were a contemporary, places him both close to Comatas, the "divine" subject of Lycidas' song and close

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[125] This poem does not qualify as "bucolic," but a similar conclusion may be drawn from the introduction to *Id.* 11. Gutzwiller (1991) shows that there is always an element of "analogy" in the *Idylls*; i.e., what happens in the narrative introduction is in some way supposedly similar to what happens in the main body of the song.

[126] Goldhill (1991: 245) terms this *polyphony*.

to Lycidas himself, who also tries to imagine this.[127] At the same time, the unpleasantness of the character of Comatas in *Id.* 5 makes Lycidas' wish in *Id.* 7 appear in a comic light.

The young Daphnis in *Id.* 6, in his turn, sings of the Cyclops Polyphemus in love, as does Theocritus, in *Id.* 11. Therefore, Theocritus is also like Daphnis. In turn, Daphnis is simultaneously unlike and like Polyphemus in his struggle with unrequited love (*Id.* 1 and 7). Finally, in *Id.* 11 the poet/herdsman Polyphemus, trying to cure his love with song, is extraordinarily like Theocritus and his contemporaries in this respect: Theocritus explicitly says so in the opening of this *Idyll*.

At this juncture, it becomes apparent that what Theocritus presents in the bucolic *Idylls* is a world held together by analogies, correspondences, *mise en abyme*, interrelations, echoes, and oppositions. His intricate juggling creates the impression that he is part of and deeply imbedded in a vital Sicilian bucolic tradition; he seems close to its origins by his marked resemblances to its mythical originators. These mythical originators, on the other hand, are such that they could well be present in Theocritus' day, up on the hillsides of Sicily. Together, they form a continuum that appears like a closed and rounded world full of ancient but ever-renewed traditions and songs. It is a world of timeless poetry at once generated by poetry and echoing with it.

The truth of the matter, of course, as argued earlier, is that Theocritus is himself the actual originator of the bucolic genre. Up to a certain point, he created the origins of bucolic himself by writing about them. That he makes the correspondences between his alleged ancestors and himself so close and that he presents these ancestors so ambiguously as being both subject and author of bucolic song should tell us enough: a major subject of bucolic song is the origin of bucolic song. This is what Theocritus is showing by his invention of traditions and by inextricably entangling himself in the web of corresponding songs.

3.13. *Conclusion*

In this chapter, the potential for Hellenistic poets to exploit mythical poets for the creation and authorization of new poetry has been illustrated with two examples. The openness to interpretation, combined with venerable authority of characters such as Orpheus and Daphnis provided

[127] On the direct apostrophe of Comatas at the end of Lycidas' song, cf. Ch. 7.4.

the authors who used them as their models and mirrors with particular possibilities for legitimizing their own poetical choices, inventions, and personae. Crucially, this process permitted them to endow their characters with features that best mirrored their own objectives. This process was enabled by the flexibility of Greek mythological material and the respect the Greeks had for anything ancient. These characteristics provided the perfect circumstances for the flourishing of "invented tradition," the anchoring of new poetic practice firmly to a time of venerable mythic origins.

Written works formed no obstacle to this enterprise: in the case of Daphnis, there were no *ipsissima verba*. In the case of Orpheus, these were highly controversial but, if they had to be taken into account, they at least revealed a close connection to the divine hymnic origins of poetry. The myth of Daphnis, though probably of local fame, was used in an allusive way by Theocritus as a kind of universal classic of the bucolic world he was creating in his *Idylls*. This bestowed credibility and relief upon this world of which his readers were no part; Theocritus could tell Daphnis' story in such a way as to make his readers feel they were listening to a familiar story, while at the same time tantalizing them with the fragmentary and allusive quality of his account.

Orpheus, on the other hand, was broadly famed throughout the Greek world. The characteristics Apollonius chose to attribute to him, which mainly focus on his close relationship to the divine world and Apollo in particular, were welcome tools for the creation of an eminently authoritative reflection of his own poetical persona and practices. The means by which these correspondences between the narrator/creator of the new poetry and their mythological alter egos/forebears are implied, are manifold, subtle, and cumulative. They pervade the works of Theocritus and Apollonius like a slight strain, a motif that repeats and echoes just audibly enough to be picked up by the perceptive reader and be construed as a pedigree for their poetry.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITICIZING CONTEMPORARIES

4.1. *The Muses' Birdcage*

Although Hellenistic poets were strongly influenced by their predecessors, as the previous chapters have shown, we have also already had occasion to note that they did have an eye on contemporary colleagues, even in their manipulations of myth or their tousles with tradition. Numerous poetical testimonies show moreover that they directly reflect and comment on their contemporaries' works and poetical choices as well. How these comments function and what underlies them is the topic of the next two chapters.

Before starting the discussion, it is important to emphasize that literary criticism is rarely a question of aesthetic judgment alone; the judgment of taste is always embedded in the societal values and interests of the community in which it is formed.[1] In the case of the Alexandrian poets, this community notoriously primarily consisted of the select company of scholars and poets in the library and museum of the Ptolemies and the friends, family, and guests of the monarch.[2] Most Alexandrian poetry, therefore, like a good deal of Hellenistic poetry in general, was in all likelihood (financially) encouraged by a court and meant to please it.[3] Hellenistic poets must have been continually aware of the necessity to garner the favor of patrons, particularly when interacting with their contemporaries, who were both colleagues and rivals.[4] The fragment of

[1] Cf. e.g. Eagleton (1985); contra e.g. Schwinge (1986), who believes that Hellenistic poetry should be read as pure art for art's sake. Nowadays this is a minority view.

[2] Alexandria is the literary community about which most is currently known. Other literary societies at other courts would presumably provide a similar picture. At any rate, Alexandria was the largest centre of learning and culture. It attracted more scholars and poets than other courts, such as Pergamon.

[3] Weber shows that this does not imply that Hellenistic poets wrote propagandistic poetry in a modern sense; on the methodological problems of defining "propaganda" in antiquity, see Weber (1993: 400–417), Enenkel and Pfeijffer (2004: 1–13).

[4] This has not always been sufficiently recognized in scholarship, although recently there is an awakening of interest in this aspect of Hellenistic poetry, cf. Weber (1993),

Timon of Phlius referenced in the title of this chapter is usually quoted to illustrate this:[5]

> πολλοὶ μὲν βόσκονται ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ πολυφύλῳ
> βιβλιακοὶ χαρακῖται ἀπείριτα δηριόωντες
> Μουσέων ἐν ταλάρῳ ... (*SH* 786)
>
> In Egypt of the many tribes, many bookish scribblers are being fed, endlessly wrangling in the Muses' birdcage ...

Besides illustrating the importance of royal patronage for the *philologoi* and poets of the Museum, it is taken to imply that mutual relations at this institution were not always of a peaceful nature; endless cackling and crest picking apparently went on amongst its fellows.[6] In fact, as we saw, the unfavorable opinions of contemporaries, their criticism and the competition that spurred on Hellenistic poets are often actually thematized in the same programmatic passages where imitation or innovation of traditional poetic models is discussed. Thus Herondas' *Mimiamb* 8 not only describes the initiation of the speaker by the grumpy old iambist Hipponax, but does so in the context of a competitive game, the *askoliasmos*. Appropriation of tradition, then, was not only risky because one might expect to be measured against the real past masters, but also because there were more competitors in the field, and a poet could not expect to be the only, the most authentic, innovative or even the most authoritative claimant to a particular tradition. Without wanting to suggest a close competitive relation between Herondas *Mimiamb* 8 and Callimachus *Iambi* 1 and 13, the fact that Hipponax features in both, is of itself significant in this context.

Aggressive competition then, which is often considered characteristic of this period (particularly Callimachus is notorious for his polemical persona) is the focus of this chapter. The professions of friendship and admiration also found in the poetry of this age are addressed in the next.

Too (1998), Stephens (2005), Strootman (2007: 189–246). These studies do not, however, treat the specific topic of the interaction between poets. For other Hellenistic references to Ptolemaic patronage, cf. e.g. Theoc. *Id.* 17.111–116, where Ptolemy II is praised for his εὐεργεσία towards poets.

[5] The passage in Ath. 1.22d, where these lines are cited, indicates that the fragment refers to the Alexandrian Museum; it is however not entirely certain that only poets are meant; the scholarly occupations may have afforded even more scope for argument and quarrels.

[6] See on this fragment and its translation in particular Mineur (1985: 383–385).

4.2. *Poetic Competition and Strife*

Before the "Muses' birdcage" of the Hellenistic era can be explored, the tradition of literary competition in which it stands deserves some comment. Hesiod's description of Ἔρις (Strife) is an excellent starting point for a first enquiry into possible drives underlying the interaction between poets:

> Οὐκ ἄρα μοῦνον ἔην Ἐρίδων γένος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν
> εἰσὶ δύω· τὴν μέν κεν ἐπαινήσειε νοήσας,
> ἡ δ' ἐπιμωμητή· διὰ δ' ἄνδιχα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν.
> ἡ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμόν τε κακὸν καὶ δῆριν ὀφέλλει,
> σχετλίη· οὔ τις τήν γε φιλεῖ βροτός, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης
> ἀθανάτων βουλῇσιν Ἔριν τιμῶσι βαρεῖαν.
> τὴν δ' ἑτέρην προτέρην μὲν ἐγείνατο Νὺξ ἐρεβεννή,
> θῆκε δέ μιν Κρονίδης ὑψίζυγος, αἰθέρι ναίων,
> γαίης [τ'] ἐν ῥίζῃσι καὶ ἀνδράσι πολλὸν ἀμείνω·
> ἥ τε καὶ ἀπάλαμόν περ ὁμῶς ἐπὶ ἔργον ἐγείρει·
> εἰς ἕτερον γάρ τίς τε ἰδεν ἔργοιο χατίζων
> πλούσιον, ὃς σπεύδει μὲν ἀρόμεναι ἠδὲ φυτεύειν
> οἶκόν τ' εὖ θέσθαι· ζηλοῖ δέ τε γείτονα γείτων
> εἰς ἄφενος σπεύδοντ'· ἀγαθὴ δ' ἥδε βροτοῖσιν.
> καὶ κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ κοτέει καὶ τέκτονι τέκτων,
> καὶ πτωχὸς πτωχῷ φθονέει καὶ ἀοιδὸς ἀοιδῷ. (*Op.* 10–25)

> So there was not just one birth of Strifes after all, but upon the earth there are two Strifes. One of these a man would praise once he got to know it, but the other is blameworthy; and they have thoroughly opposed spirits. For the one fosters evil war and conflict—cruel one, no mortal loves that one, but it is by necessity that they honor the oppressive Strife, by the plans of the immortals. But the other one gloomy Night bore first; and Cronus' highthroned son, who dwells in the aether, set it in the roots of the earth, and it is much better for men. It rouses even the helpless man to work. For a man who is not working but who looks at some other man, a rich one who is hastening to plow and plant and set his house in order, he envies him, one neighbor envying his neighbor who is hastening towards wealth: and this Strife is good for mortals. And potter is angry with potter and builder with builder, and beggar begrudges beggar, and poet poet. (transl. Most)

Hesiod distinguishes bad Strife, which engenders aggression and destruction, from good Strife, which ensures cultural and economical progress by inciting envy of others' success and hence competition (19–23).[7]

[7] Cf. Hdt. 3.80.3: envy is natural to man and has been so from the beginning. On the Greek concept of envy, see Walcot (1978), Konstan and Ruthers (2003).

He apparently sees the latter as an active force in the development of song, as it may be inferred that the professional envy that poets feel towards each other pushes them towards better composition and performance. The mechanism posited in this passage seems to be confirmed by the observation that several early Greek poets use the perceived defects of their predecessors or contemporaries to draw attention to their own superior poetic judgment and qualities. This is demonstrated for instance in Pindar's and Aristophanes' well known criticism of other poets.[8]

Alternatively, poets may claim to be the object of envy (presumably of their colleagues), for only what is excellent is envied, as Pindar states:

> πολλὰ γὰρ πολλᾷ λέλεκται, ν⟨εα⟩ρὰ δ' ἐξευ-
> ρόντα δόμεν βασάνῳ
> ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος· ὄ-
> ψον δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν,
> ἅπτεται δ' ἐσλῶν ἀεί, χειρόνεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει. (*N.* 8.18–24)
>
> For many things have been said in many ways, but to discover new ones and put them to the touchstone for testing is sheer danger, since words are dessert to the envious, and envy fastens always on the good, but has no quarrel with lesser men. (transl. Race)

As Hesiod saw correctly, then, this all works on the principle of competition: a poet gains status if he is better than a colleague or predecessor or if he is object of envy. Thus early poetic criticism often involved poets positioning themselves against others.

In addition to being influenced by such mechanisms of personal competition and strife, criticism over time acquired theoretical, often aesthetic or moral, foundations. Literary criticism in the modern sense (i.e., the systematic interpretation and evaluation of literary texts) became a discipline in its own right only with sophists such as Gorgias. It was laid down in treatises (e.g., Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*) and presumably formed the subject of many of the (now lost) writings of scholars in the Museum and Library of Alexandria,[9] the first to be referred to

[8] E.g. Pi. *N.* 4.6, *N.* 7.15–24, *O.* 2.87–88; the *scholia* claim that Pindar is quarreling here with Bacchylides and Simonides. *P.* 2.55, *N.* 7.21 respectively invite comparison between Archilochus' and Homer's poetry and Pindar's own. Aristophanes' *parabaseis* (e.g. *Ach.* 629; *Eq.* 507; *Nub.* 518; *Vesp.* 1015; *Pax* 734; *Ran.* 12) criticize his colleagues in the field of comedy.

[9] On criticism until Plato, see e.g. Harriott (1969), Kennedy (1989), Ford (2002); on Greek literary criticism in general, see Verdenius (1983). Examples of (lost) Hellenistic

as κριτικοί.[10] However, about such Hellenistic literary criticism little is known. What remains is fragmentary, taken from tattered papyruses or from paraphrases in later grammarians. A category apart is formed by the badly damaged Herculaneum papyri of Philodemus' *On Poems*; yet most theories discussed in this work seem to have little in common with what can be seen in Hellenistic poetic practice.[11] Other critical treatises that contain or reflect Hellenistic theories are from later periods and therefore contaminate these theories with earlier and later views, making them hardly useful for judging Hellenistic criticism.[12]

This explains why analyses of meta-poetic and critical expressions relating to contemporary practice in Hellenistic poetry itself have been attempted time and again. Since this poetry frequently self-consciously addresses poetics, often while demonstrating them, the approach initially seems promising. This explains the large corpus of scholarship dedicated to the aesthetic views of the man generally considered the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the Hellenistic period, Callimachus.[13] When examined, the

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criticism are Callimachus' *Pinakes*, cf. Blum (1991); *Grapheion* (fr. 380 Pf.) and *Museum* cf. Pfeiffer (1968: 339); Apollonius' studies on Archilochus, cf. Pfeiffer (1968: 141), Fraser (1972: II, 653, nn. 38–39). On ancient literary scholarship in general, see Pfeiffer (1968). On Hellenistic scholarship, see Bing (1993: 619–631), Rossi (2001: 86–91), Rengakos (1993; 1994; 2001), with special reference to the study of Homer's texts.

[10] Cf. Str. 14.657 on Philitas: ποιητὴς ἅμα καὶ κριτικός. This combination had never been applied to anyone before; the stress in the expression falls on ποιητής, cf. Pfeiffer (1968: 89).

[11] Cf. Janko (2003: 120–165). The main concern of the critics who Philodemus discusses is εὐφωνία (the pleasantness of sound, putting sound over content). This is presumably an Epicurean tenet, related to the idea of ψυχαγωγία (poetry's ability to enchant the soul). Only a certain Heracleodorus named by Philodemus has something in common with Hellenistic poets. He rejects the (Aristotelian) notion that genre is linked to style and word-choice. This resembles the views expressed on *polyeideia* in Call. *Iamb.* 13 (fr. 203 Pf.). However, Janko dates him after Callimachus. See also Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 449–461), who do find some subtle likenesses between tenets discussed by Philodemus and general "poetics" discernible in Hellenistic poetry.

[12] E.g. Demetrius' *On Style* (first cent. CE, according to Schenkeveld 1964: 135–148), Horace's *Ars Poetica*, the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first cent. CE), Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (*idem*), or Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime* (third cent. CE), Photius' *Bibliotheca* (ninth cent. CE), discussing the ideas of the Alexandrian scholar Didymus (second cent. BCE).

[13] The scholarly discussion following the discovery of the papyrus containing the *Aetia prologue* (1928) is described by Benedetto (1993), with ample bibliography. He also discusses the "quarrel between Callimachus and Apollonius." Eichgruen (1961) and Cameron (1995) are examples of monographs dedicated to Callimachus' quarrels and critics.

aesthetic points of view expressed in his poetry (most importantly the *Aetia*-prologue and *Hymn* II) reveal that he disliked long bombastic works and preferred elegant poetry on a small scale. All in all this seems a bit disappointing and rather unsurprising, since it reflects the exact image of the poetry he himself produced. An analysis of the *rhetorical* strategy underlying his expressions is more instructive.

In the ensuing, I discuss some Callimachean passages from such a rhetorical and strategic point of view. Besides I will analyze the famous debate allegedly instigated by Callimachus on how (not) to write poetry. To structure observations on these issues, reference will be made to the theory of the Field of Cultural Production as established by Pierre Bourdieu. While the relative scarcity of material prevents sociologists from composing an image of the Alexandrian Field of Cultural Production as complete as that of, say, mid-twentieth-century France, Bourdieu's theory will, as I hope to show, nevertheless shed some light on the social aspects of Alexandrian poetry.[14]

4.3. *Bourdieu's Field of Cultural Production*

Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theory centers on the idea that art is not a category on its own, separate from society. It is therefore not simply a disinterested expression of ideas and emotions on the part of an artist, who is a lone genius.[15] Nor is it a product that can be described as the outcome of rigidly determined social-historical processes, as Marxism, for instance, assumes. Bourdieu contends that the art world (like the fashion world, academic world, and clerical world) has its own economic laws similar to those in the world at large. He calls these "fields of cultural production" and maintains that each one operates by its own rules and should be studied in its own right, paying attention to its specific idiosyncrasies. Yet, it is also true that all fields operate on a similar set of principles.

The interaction between actors in a particular field determines how the "symbolic capital" that circulates is divided. These actors include artists, patrons, "brokers" who introduce artists to powerful and wealthy

[14] For a study of Roman literary patronage in the age of Domitian, employing the principles of Bourdieu's theory, see Nauta (2002). Of course, *testimonia* for this era are much richer than for the Hellenistic period.

[15] Cf. e.g. Bourdieu (1993).

patrons, public opinion, art galleries, publishers, and critics.[16] The acquisition of symbolic or "cultural" capital (e.g. recognition by peers as a distinguished artist or the power to decide "who's in and who's out"), can lead to the acquisition of real, monetary capital. It is clear that competition determines the economic laws operative in the field of cultural production, but not always in obvious ways. For instance, Bourdieu claims that elite, avant-garde, or experimental art is sometimes considered better if less people are able to enjoy or understand it. In the example he takes, the literary world of twentieth century France, this entailed that the avant-garde artist generally received no share, or a relatively small share of monetary capital. Popular art was, on the same logics, considered despicable, whereas the artist who was only considered a genius by few, or hoped to be so by future generations, emerged as the real winner, and thus came in possession of cultural capital of a specific type. By this kind of reasoning the avant-garde artist and his select public "distinguished" themselves from the broad masses. "Distinction" is a form of cultural capital: a distinctive taste (e.g., for avant-garde art) proclaims membership to an elite social or intellectual category; it can only be obtained by the happy few.

In Alexandrian literary culture, the cultural elite that appreciated avant-garde poetry were presumably primarily formed by the fellows of the Museum and Library and by royal society (i.e., the king and his family, friends and courtiers). Elitist avant-garde poetry created for a select public would therefore presumably obtain cultural capital as well as monetary capital, or at least the material benefits of royal patronage. This makes the logic of the Alexandrian Field of Cultural Production somewhat different from Bourdieu's example.

4.4. *Callimachus and Apollonius*

A fitting beginning to an analysis of the Alexandrian Muses' Birdcage against this theoretical background is the discussion of the most famous example of alleged Strife in Hellenistic poetry. It has long been received opinion in scholarship, and is indeed still sometimes stated, that the two

[16] Some of these categories are anachronisms in the Hellenistic era (e.g. publishers, art-galleries, critics in the modern sense of the word). However, there were patrons (the court elite), literary scholars, and guilds of (dramatic) poets to foster and promote literature, cf. Weber (1993: 122–182).

major Alexandrian poets, Callimachus and his student (μαθητής, *Vitae*) or friend (γνώριμος, P. Oxy. 1241) Apollonius, quarreled.[17] However, there are no unequivocal ancient sources that describe the dispute or explain what it was about.

Let me start with the first issue. The story of the quarrel can be traced to the (probably unreliable) anonymous *Vitae* of Apollonius, which mention his departure to Rhodes after an unsatisfactory public reading of the *Argonautica*.[18] The text of the relevant passage in the first *Vita* reads:

> οὗτος ἐμαθήτευσε Καλλιμάχῳ ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ὄντι γραμματικῷ, καὶ συντάξας ταῦτα τὰ ποιήματα ἐπεδείξατο. σφόδρα δὲ ἀποτυχὼν καὶ ἐρυθριάσας παρεγένετο ἐν τῇ Ῥόδῳ κἀκεῖ ἐπολιτεύσατο καὶ σοφιστεύει ῥητορικοὺς λόγους, ὅθεν αὐτὸν καὶ Ῥόδιον ἀποκαλεῖν βούλονται.
> (*Vita* β, 4–9)
>
> He was a student with Callimachus, the grammarian, in Alexandria and, after having composed these poems [i.e., the *Argonautica*], he gave a public reading of them. But seriously failing to obtain success and therefore very much ashamed, he went to Rhodes and became a citizen there and taught rhetoric, and this why they like to call this same man "of Rhodes."

The passage makes no mention of any quarrel between Callimachus and Apollonius. That Apollonius' lack of success had anything to do with Callimachus must have been read into it only later, in connection with other texts. One of these is the *diegesis* to Callimachus' *Iambus* 5, a heavily tattered poem of which the contents are hard to make out. It states:

> Γραμματο[δ]ιδάσκαλ[ο]ν, ὄνομα Ἀπολλώνιον, οἱ δὲ Κλέωνά τινα, ἰαμβίζει ὡς τοὺς ἰδίους μαθητὰς καταισχύνοντα, ἐν ἤθει εὐνοίας ἀπαγ[ο]ρεύων τούτῳ δρᾶν, μὴ ἁλῷ. (fr. 1.195 Pf.)
>
> He [sc. Callimachus] is mocking a schoolmaster by the name of Apollonius, or, according to others, some Cleon, as abusing his own pupils, telling him in a friendly way not to do that, so as not to get caught.

Since the *Iambus* itself is in such poor condition, it is not easy to establish what this *diegesis* refers to. Was there an unnamed schoolmaster attacked in *Iambus* 5? If so, do some critics identify him with Apollonius and

[17] So e.g. Rose (1960: 325): "Apollonius clearly had a following, although Kallimachos remained the leader of orthodox literary opinion, and the two poets did not spare each other ... the most famous literary quarrel in antiquity." Cf. Lesky (1971: 819), Fraser (1972: I, 749–754), Green (1997: introduction). The Latin poets, many of them imitators of Callimachus, do not mention the quarrel.

[18] On the untrustworthiness of the *Vitae* of Apollonius, see Lefkowitz (1980: 1–19), Cameron (1995: 214–219).

others with a certain Cleon?[19] Or was there a schoolmaster whom Callimachus called "Apollonius" but who was a certain Cleon in reality?[20] And what does the phrase "abusing his own pupils" (τοὺς ἰδίους μαθητὰς καταισχύνοντα) refer to? Based on the information in the *diegesis*, unsurprisingly, the *Iambus* has been held to attack a schoolmaster for the erotic abuse of his pupils.[21] To take but one example of how the quarrel still keeps rearing its head in contemporary criticism, let us consider the work of Emanuele Lelli who has recently proposed a different interpretation: the *diegesis*' phrasing should be read in terms of *literary polemic*: the word "schoolmaster" is employed as a deprecatory term to belittle literary pretence. This extremely speculative hypothesis aims to reassert that there was a quarrel between Apollonius and Callimachus, and that it was about (epic) poetry. The weak point in Lelli's reasoning is evidently that there are no arguments whatsoever to assume that this *Iambus* is indeed about a literary quarrel rather than about a schoolmaster abusing his pupils. The assumption that the fifth *Iambus* attacked the *Argonautica* of Apollonius, then, does not appear likely.

An epigram containing an attack on Callimachus, which was purportedly written by Apollonius, has also been adduced as evidence for the quarrel:

> Καλλίμαχος τὸ κάθαρμα, τὸ παίγνιον, ὁ ξύλινος νοῦς
> αἴτιος ὁ γράψας Αἴτια Καλλιμάχου. (*AP* 11.275)

> Callimachus, the piece of waste, the insipid joke, the wooden mind, is guilty, he who wrote the *Aetia* of Callimachus.[22]

As Wilamowitz recognized, the presupposed situation of the epigram is that Apollonius, when asked who was guilty of his banishment to Rhodes, gave this answer.[23] However, there is severe doubt that this epigram should be attributed to Apollonius *of Rhodes*, considering the

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[19] So D'Alessio (2000: 106–107), Lelli (2004: 114–115).

[20] So Cameron (1995: 229).

[21] So first (before the *diegesis* had been found): Coppola (1933: 167), afterwards: Clayman (1980: 29–33), Kerkhecker (1999: 136–137), Acosta-Hughes (2002: 251–252), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 14). The verb καταισχύνω can be used of sexual abuse (LSJ *s.v.* 2, e.g. Lys. 1.49.5).

[22] It is explained by Ferguson (1970: 66) as follows: Καλλίμαχος: / Κάλλυσμα: τὸ κάθαρμα / Καλλώπισμα: τὸ παίγνιον / Καλόπους: ὁ ξύλινος [ποῦς] νοῦς. (Callimachus: *Kallysma*: piece of filth; *Kallopisma*: joke; *Kalopous*: wooden [leg] mind); i.e., the epigram pretends to be based on an alphabetical dictionary.

[23] Wilamowitz (1924: I, 96–97). However, he did not believe that the epigram was written by Apollonius, and placed it in the tradition of rhetorical exercises in *ethopoiia*, cf. e.g. *AP* 7.351 (on the daughters of Lycambes).

addition in the MS of the *Palatine Anthology* of the cognomen ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΚΟΥ (The Grammarian) instead of the expected ΡΟΔΙΟΥ (of Rhodes).[24] That the epigram is found in the eleventh book amidst satiric epigrams from the Imperial Age also lessens its value as trustworthy evidence.

The final text (probably the latest chronologically) directly regarding the matter, is found in the *Suda's* remark concerning Callimachus' enigmatic (lost) invective poem *Ibis*.[25]

> Ἶβις ἔστι δὲ ποίημα ἐπιτετηδευμένον εἰς ἀσάφειαν καὶ λοιδορίαν, εἴς τινα Ἶβιν, γενόμενον ἐχθρὸν τοῦ Καλλιμάχου. ἦν δὲ οὗτος Ἀπολλώνιος, ὁ γράψας τὰ Ἀργοναυτικά. (*Suda s.v.* Καλλίμαχος, 15–16)
>
> *Ibis* is a poem written with the intention of obscurity and blame against a certain Ibis, who had become an enemy of Callimachus. And this was Apollonius, the one who wrote the *Argonautica*.

According to the *Suda* then, the *Ibis* was written to attack Apollonius. This implies that the poem was another expression of the literary quarrel between the two contemporaries. Alan Cameron however persuasively argues that the second half of the explanation ("And this was ...," ἦν δὲ οὗτος ...) is a later interpolation and therefore presumably guesswork. *Ibis* is the only title in the *Suda*'s lemma on Callimachus' works that is explained at all, which of itself should raise some suspicion. It is very likely that no one knew who was referred to by "Ibis," certainly not the tenth-century CE scribe of the *Suda* (or an even later interpolator). It may indeed have been the case that the poem was a literary exercise in curse poetry, which would mean that the person attacked never even existed.[26] Unfortunately, there is little other information about Callimachus' *Ibis* apart from this mention and hardly any about the extent of its resemblance to Ovid's extant poem of the same name.[27] A final verdict on the probability that it dealt with Apollonius cannot be reached therefore.

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[24] Cf. Cameron (1995: 227–228). He relates it to (late) epigrams disparaging the style of Callimachus, e.g. *AP* 11.321, 11.322 (1995: 229).

[25] *Suda s.v.* Καλλίμαχος. Below, I discuss inferences drawn from Callimachus' own implicit poetic utterances, which never refer to any "enemy" by name, cf. on this aspect of Hellenistic poetics Treu (1963: 273–290).

[26] So Housman (1921: 67–68), Cameron (1995: 228). Cf. e.g. the Hellenistic catalogue poems *Arai* (*Curses*) by Moero and the anonymous *Tattoo-elegy* (on which see Huys 1991). These too appear to be mere literary exercises in invective, not aimed at anyone in particular.

[27] Except Ov. *Ib.* 55–60: *Nunc quo Battiades inimicum devovet Ibin/Hoc ego devoveo*

Clearly, the evidence that Apollonius and Callimachus quarreled is scanty, but, if they did, what was supposed to have been at issue? An answer to this has generally been sought in Callimachus' own works, in particular the *Aetia*-prologue (fr. 1 Pf.). The main theme of this fragment is the objection to long and unrefined poetry on hackneyed themes.[28] Its polemic tone makes it attractive to be connected with the alleged quarrel. This has led to the idea that Callimachus disliked *Apollonius' epic*, as being too long, unrefined and treating hackneyed subject matter.[29] Along an entirely different line of reasoning, scholars have argued that one should not try and find a historical basis for the quarrel but look at it in different terms, namely as fitting certain recurrent patterns of anecdotic biography.[30] It is generally held that ancient biography, as exemplified by the Apollonius-*Vitae*, works along schematic, conventional lines; the insertion of a quarrel is a standard way of expressing the assumed relationship of rivalry between two contemporary authors. An excellent comparison for this process can be found in the way the *scholia* describe the relation between Pindar and Simonides or Bacchylides.[31] These three contemporaries all wrote epinician poetry, sometimes even for the same patrons. The scholiasts therefore assume that they were rivals and that they quarreled. And so obscure references to "a pair of unwise crows that cackle against the divine bird of Zeus" in Pindar's poetry (*O.* 2.87–88) are interpreted in the *scholia* as referring to Bacchylides and Simonides, attacking Pindar.

Another line of approach keeps the idea of the quarrel intact but denies that it was about poetry. This argument is as follows: Apollonius' epic

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teque tuosque modo. / Utque ille, historiis involvam carmina caecis: / Non soleam quamvis hoc genus ipse sequi. / Illius ambages imitatus in Ibide dicar / Oblitus moris iudiciique mei. (Now, as Battiades cursed his enemy Ibis, I will curse you and yours in the same way. And like him I have involved my poem with hidden matters: I have followed him, though I am unused to this sort of thing. Its convolutions are uttered in imitation of those in *Ibis*, oblivious of my own custom and taste.) See on the possible likeness between the two poems Housman (1921: 67–68), La Penna (1957) introduction, Cameron (1995: 228).

[28] Cf. e.g. *Aetia* fr. 1 Pf.; *Hymn* II (105–113); *AP* 12.43. Cameron argues it is unlikely that the elegiac *Aetia* was criticizing epic (1995: 337–338).

[29] Cf. e.g. Eichgruen (1961), Lesky (1971: 729–730), Fraser (1972: I, 636 ff.), Arrighetti (1989: 157), D'Alessio (1996), Lelli (2004: 78–82).

[30] Cf. Wehrli (1941: 14–21), Lefkowitz (1980: 1–19), Lloyd-Jones (1984: 58–59).

[31] Lefkowitz (1980: 1–19) argues that Callimachus and Apollonius deliberately created a rivalry on the model of famous examples like these. Examples of representing contemporaries in the same field as rivals are the *Certamen Homeri Hesiodique* and Ar. *Ran.* (Aeschylus and Euripides). *Vita Aeschyli* cap. 8, mentions the rivalry between Sophocles and Aeschylus over tragedy and between Simonides and Aeschylus over elegy.

poetry is nothing if not Callimachean in its aesthetic aims (polished, extremely refined, not really long compared to for instance Homeric epic; a new approach to heroic subject matter).[32] Consequently, there must have been another ground for quarreling. Fraser, for example, wildly speculates that Apollonius' humble Egyptian origin must have been at the bottom of it; this earned him the scorn of the aristocratic, Greek-Cyrenaic Callimachus.[33] This kind of conjecture of course remains impossible to prove.

The recent return to the idea (not shared by many scholars) that the quarrel in fact does focus on the right way to compose epic poetry is based on a new evaluation of Callimachus' *Iambi* (esp. 4 and 5). Since Apollonius and Callimachus were both masters of the art of epic and agreed in general lines about the way to renew it, their quarrel, as defenders of this theory claim, must have concentrated on the finer poetic details.[34] If so, it is hard to see how modern scholars, more than two thousand years later and with little more to go on than the implicit poetic remarks of Callimachus and their own evaluation of Apollonius' style, could hope to unearth this discussion.

Rounding up these considerations, it is time to reach a conclusion and to formulate my own hypothesis about these matters. In the first place, the *testimonia* do not appear to justify the claim that Callimachus quarreled with Apollonius and do not suggest what this quarrel was about. Considering that Apollonius' epic shows definite signs of Callimachean influence,[35] it seems unlikely that Callimachus objected to Apollonius'

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[32] E.g. Lefkowitz (1981: 133–135), Margolies (1995), Cuypers (2004: 43–63).

[33] Fraser (1972: I, 753–754) bases this on the fact that the ibis (hence the title of the poem *Ibis*) is an indigenous Egyptian bird; from this he deduced that Apollonius had a native Egyptian background.

[34] Arrighetti (1989: 157), D'Alessio (1996: *ad loc.*), Lelli (2004: 78–82). The latter claims they quarreled about the merits of the *Argonautica* and the *Hecale* on the following grounds: 1) Length: Apollonius adhered to the length of three tragedies and a satyr play for his epic, unlike Callimachus. 2) Unity: Apollonius chose a grand unified theme for his epic; Callimachus chose a futile, un-heroic element of myth (*Hecale*). 3) Character: Apollonius' epic is "tragic" whereas Callimachus' epic is elegiac-comic (*Hecale*). Most of these assumptions cannot be proven: *ad* 1): It is unknown whether the length of the *Argonautica* was coincidence or planned; it is unknown how long *Hecale* was (cf. Hollis 1990: 3–7). *Ad* 2): The unity of the *Argonautica* is not of the kind that Aristotle meant (cf. Hunter, 1993: appendix). *Ad* 3): This might be granted, cf. Callimachus' objections against poems about "deeds of heroes and kings" (*Aetia*). However Apollonius' Jason and Medea are not traditional heroes; cf. e.g. Lawall (1966: 121–169).

[35] E.g. the numerous aetiological explanations, the fact that Callimachus also treated the myth of the Argonauts (cf. *Aet.* frs. 7–21 Pf.), the innovative style in general. This

poem for being at odds with his own poetic credo of elegance, refinement, and the novel treatment of traditional subject matter. Therefore, I would prefer to propose the following. It was natural for later readers to suppose that a quarrel between Callimachus and Apollonius would have concerned the (uncomfortably) close similarity of style and subject matter. Like Pindar and his "rivals," Callimachus and Apollonius worked in the same environment for the same patrons and wrote poetry in similar styles on the same subjects. Later generations may have felt this situation was bound to end in quarreling.[36] In Bourdieu's terms, it was attractive to assume that two actors operating in the same field of cultural production, striving for the same cultural capital, dependent on the same recipients, would end up as rivals. This has been garbled into a story about a quarrel on poetic differences. The polemical persona that speaks from so much of Callimachus' poetry did the rest.

4.5. *The* Aetia-*Prologue*

The most notorious instance of this polemical persona of Callimachus appears in the *Aetia*-prologue (fr. 1 Pf.). However, if this text does not refer to the quarrel between Apollonius and Callimachus, it is unclear which dispute it references, if any. It has often been read as a forestalling of expected criticism on the *Aetia* (or Callimachus' poetics in general) from a rivaling poetic faction.[37] Recently, the historical realities behind the polemics presented in the prologue have, like the quarrel between Apollonius and Callimachus, become subject to doubt: was Callimachus as beleaguered by critics as he would have his readers believe?[38] Is it necessary, or even possible, to identify the critics whom Callimachus (like the *Scholia Florentina* on the *Aetia*) calls the "Telchines?"

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approach presumes, as most scholars from antiquity onwards do, that Callimachus is the elder of the two and therefore more likely to have influenced Apollonius, cf. e.g. Fraser (1972: I, 627, 631–632, 635, 751, 776, 783).

[36] Cf. Lefkowitz (1980: 1–19). It could be objected that there is also a great similarity between Theocritus (esp. *Id.* 13 and 22) and Apollonius, while here ancient tradition makes no mention of a quarrel. However, presumably Theocritus was linked to the Alexandrian Museum. It might also be argued that his poetry was rather different from that of Apollonius, in not containing a full-blown epic, like e.g. Callimachus' *Hecale* was.

[37] Cameron (1995: 104–133) thinks the reference is strictly to the *Aetia*; Fraser (1972: I, 754–756, 760) thinks it refers to Callimachus'poetics in general; this has long been the dominant view in histories of Greek literature.

[38] Most explicitly Lefkowitz (1981: 120–125), Cameron (1995: *passim*), Asper (1997: 247), Schmitz (1999: 151–178).

The answer to both questions partly depends on which readers Callimachus envisaged for the *Aetia*.[39] It may be confidently asserted that this poem was meant primarily for court circles, since the Ptolemies figure prominently in it.[40] Its secondary audience would have been broader: anyone able to appreciate Callimachus' style of writing. This would have included his educated Greek-speaking contemporaries in Alexandria and abroad, and eventually, later generations.[41] As it seems inherently likely that appreciation of his work would not have been limited to an inner circle, references to "literary adversaries" would have had to be comprehensible for them, too, and cannot have been entirely esoteric.

It could be asked, *a fortiori*, why the Ptolemies, the most important members of Callimachus' intended audience, would have lent their support to a poet who was obscure, controversial and continually occupied with personal literary feuds when they could have had any poet at their command. Surely, the esoteric detail of literary quarrels in which rivals needed to be identified from obscure clues would have held little interest for them and can therefore hardly be expected to have featured in a poem that sang their praises, as the *Aetia* does. On the other hand, supporting an excellent poet who stated that his elitist aesthetics were not to be grasped by all may have appealed to their expectations and given them the pleasurable sense of possessing a distinguished taste. The question must therefore be repeated: was Callimachus what he wants the reader to believe he was, a truly controversial poet admired by few and envied, attacked, and misunderstood by many? It may well be that this is a convenient and flattering exaggeration, perhaps even a partial fiction, designed to enhance the sense of "exclusive taste" in order to please his patrons. Whether or not "the Telchines" attacked in the *Aetia*–prologue actually are the individuals identified by the *Scholia Florentina* becomes of sec-

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[39] In the ensuing, I will use the word "readers" to indicate the recipients (contemporary or otherwise) of Callimachus' poetry; this does not mean that I think Callimachus never recited his poetry.

[40] E.g. *The Lock of Berenice* (fr. 110 Pf.). For Callimachus' relation with the Ptolemaic court, see e.g. Fraser (1972: I; 663, 789–790), Weber (1993: 122–149), Cameron (1995: 3–71), Stephens (2004: 161–176). Weber argues that such an audience would have comprised an educated elite from several Greek *poleis* consisting of intellectuals, friends of the King, high military officers, rich merchants, aristocratic guests and ambassadors of other Kings.

[41] Even Callimachus' larger readership will presumably have been a relative minority. However, estimates of ancient literacy are greatly at odds; for arguments in favor of a relatively high rate of literacy in Hellenistic Egypt, see Cameron (1995: 47–53). For Callimachus also having future generations in mind, cf. fr. 7.13–14 Pf.

ondary importance in this light. What counts is that Callimachus can boast of envious opponents, like Pindar once did, and thus paradoxically heighten his own standing as a poet.[42]

This insight enhances the importance of analyzing the Telchines' portrayal as literary opponents. Taking the *Aetia* prologue as a primary example and providing parallels from other poems, I will illustrate how Callimachus manipulates his readers, making them an offer they cannot refuse.[43] The attempt to gain distinction in the field of cultural production will prove to be an important factor determining this rhetorical strategy.

To return to the initial problem, approaching the original problem in terms of rhetorical strategy (rather than historical investigation), we may now ask: who is Callimachus addressing in the prologue to his *Aetia* and how does he address them? It is necessary to look at the text in its entirety to answer this.

πολλάκ⸥ι μοι Τελχῖνες ἐπιτρύζουσιν ἀ⸤οιδῇ,
    νήιδε⸥ς οἳ Μούσης οὐκ ἐγένοντο φίλοι,
εἵνεκε⸥ν οὐχ ἓν ἄεισμα διηνεκὲς ἢ βασιλ[η
    ......]ας ἐν πολλαῖς ἤνυσα χιλιάσιν
ἢ .....].ους ἥρωας, ἔπος δ᾽ ἐπὶ τυτθὸν ἑλ[ίσσω
    παῖς ἅτ⸥ε, τῶν δ᾽ ἐτέων ἡ δεκ⸤ὰς⸥ οὐκ ὀλίγη.
......].[.]και Τε[λ]χῖσιν ἐγὼ τόδε· "φῦλον α[
    ....] τ̣ήκ[ειν] ἧπαρ ἐπιστάμενον,
......]..ρεην̣ [ὀλ]ιγόστιχος· ἀλλὰ καθέλ⸤κει
    .... πο⸥λ̣ὺ̣ τὴν μακρὴν ὄμπνια Θεσμοφόρο[ς·
τοῖν δὲ] δ̣υ̣οῖν Μίμνρμος ὅτι γλυκύς, α⸤ἱ γ᾽ ἁ̣π̣αλαὶ
    ......] ἡ μεγάλη δ᾽ οὐκ ἐδίδαξε γυνή.
.....]ο̣ν ἐπὶ Θρήϊκας ἀπ᾽ Αἰγύπτοιο [πέτοιτο
    αἵματ]ι̣ Π̣υ̣γ̣μαίων ἡδο̣μ̣ένη [γ]έρα[νος,
Μασσα⸥γ̣έ̣τ̣αι ⸤κ⸥αὶ μακρὸν ὀϊστεύοιε̣ν ἐπ᾽ ἄνδρα
    Μῆδον]· ἀ̣[ηδονίδες] δ̣᾽ ὧδε μελιχρ[ό]τεραι.
ἔλλετε Βασκανίης ὀλοὸν γένος· αὖθι δὲ τέχνῃ
    κρίνετε,] ⸤μὴ σχοί⸥νῳ̣ Περσίδι τὴν σοφίην·
μηδ᾽ ἀπ᾽ ἐμεῦ διφᾶ⸥τε μέγα ψοφέουσαν ἀοιδήν
    τίκτεσθαι· βροντᾶ⸥ν οὐκ ἐμόν, ⸤ἀλλὰ⸥ Διός."
καὶ γὰρ ὅ⸥τε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα
    γούνασι⸥ν, Ἀπ[ό]λλων εἶπεν ὅ μοι Λύκιος·
".......]... ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅττι πάχιστον
    θρέψαι, τὴ]ν̣ Μοῦσαν δ᾽ ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην·
πρὸς δέ σε] καὶ τόδ᾽ ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἅμαξαι
    τὰ στείβει⸥ν, ἑτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ᾽ ὁμά

[42] Cf. Lefkowitz (1981: 1–19).

[43] The following builds upon some important insights formulated by Asper (1997: 246–247) and Schmitz (1999: 151–178).

δίφρον ἐλ]ᾷν μηδ᾽ οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
    ἀτρίπτο]υ̣ς, εἰ καὶ στε⸤ι⸥ν̣οτέρην ἐλάσεις."
τῷ πιθόμη]ν· ἐνὶ τοῖς γὰρ ἀείδομεν οἳ λιγὺν ἦχον
    τέττιγος, θ]όρυβον δ᾽ οὐκ ἐφίλησαν ὄνων.
θηρὶ μὲν οὐατόεντι πανείκελον ὀγκήσαιτο
    ἄλλος, ἐγ]ὼ δ᾽ εἴην οὑλ̣[α]χύς, ὁ πτερόεις,
ἆ πάντ⸥ως, ἵνα γῆρας ἵνα δρόσον ἣν μὲν ἀείδω
    προίκιο⸥ν ἐκ δίης ἠέρος εἶδαρ ἔδων,
αὖθι τ⸥ὸ̣ δ̣᾽ ⸤ἐκ⸥δύοιμ⸤ι⸥, τό μοι βάρος ὅσσον ἔπεστι
    τριγ⸥λ̣ώ̣⸤χι⸥ν̣ ὀλ⸤οῷ⸥ νῆσος ἐπ᾽ Ἐγκελάδῳ.
.... Μοῦσαι γ⸥ὰρ ὅσους ἴδον ὄθμα⸤τ⸥ι παῖδας
    μὴ λοξῷ, πολιοὺς⸥ οὐκ ἀπέθεντο φίλους.
............]σε̣[..]πτερὸν οὐκέτι κινεῖν
    ....]η τ̣[ῆ]μ̣ος ἐνεργότατος. (Aetia fr. 1 Pf.)

The Telchines, ignoramuses, who are no friends of the Muses, often grumble at my poetry, because [I don't write] one continuous poem about kings' [deeds], in many thousands of lines, [or about] the heroes [of yore], but unfold my poetry in small stretches like a child (5), though the decades of my years are not few. But I say this to the Telchines: "You [...] tribe, who only know how to eat your own heart out, yes, indeed he [or: I] was a man of few verses, but bountiful Demeter outweighs by far the long (10) [...] and of the two [books] Mimnermus [wrote], not the Big Woman, but the delicate [...] show that he was sweet. Let the crane that revels in the [blood] of Pygmies fly a long stretch to Thrace from Egypt and let Massagetae shoot from a long way off at the [Mede] (15). Yet [nightingales] are sweeter this way. Be gone, you wretched race of the Evil Eye and from now on [judge] artistry by its craftsmanship, not with the Persian yardstick. And don't expect me to bring forth a loudly roaring song. The thunder belongs to Zeus, not to me." (20) For, the very first time I put a writing tablet on my knees, Apollo Lycius said to me: "[Remember, dear] poet, to fatten the victim as much as you can, but, my friend, to keep the Muse slim. And I'm telling you another thing: take the roads that are not open to hackneys, (25) and do not drive your [chariot] in the ruts of others, and not over the broad way, but on [untrodden] paths, even if that means driving along a narrower lane." [Him I obeye]d, for we sing among those who love the shrill sound [of the cicada], but not the braying of asses. (30) Let [another] swell till he grows indistinguishable from the long eared beast; I'd rather be the small one, the winged one, yes, indeed, that I might sing and feed on dew, the gift of the air divine, and shed old age that weighs upon me, as heavy as the Three Cornered Isle weighs on Enceladus. (35) [But no matter]: for upon who the Muses in childhood looked with no unfriendly gaze, they won't neglect them when they are grey. [...] no longer stirs its wing, then most energetically [...]. (40)[44]

[44] Text based on Harder (2010).

Callimachus opens by referring to the Telchines in the third person, which immediately makes clear that they are not the addressees of the prologue, but rather its subject. Most educated contemporaries of Callimachus would probably have thought of the "Telchines" as mythical creatures with malevolent associations.[45] Even so, it would be obvious to modern readers without this detailed knowledge that the Telchines are to be understood as Callimachus' rightful enemies. They are unintelligent creatures (νῆιδες, 2) and no friends of the Muses, the goddesses of poetry (2) with whom Callimachus professes to be closely associated (37), or Apollo (22–28). Since the Telchines are disqualified as unperceptive readers of poetry, his readers will want to feel that they are more discerning than these creatures, even if Callimachus does not directly tell them so. The Telchines function as foils.[46]

In the sequel, the readers are again invited, this time in a positive way to identify with Callimachus' ideal audience: "We sing for those who love the sweet sound of the cicada, but not the loud braying of asses" (29–30).[47] When confronted with this easy dichotomy, no one would care to be among those who prefer the braying of asses to the cicada's music. In both instances, Callimachus manipulates his readers' self-esteem in order to assure their sympathy.[48] He maneuvers them into the role of the ideal audience.

Apart from assuring his audience's sympathy in this way, Callimachus moreover contrasts the alleged opinions of the Telchines with his own poetic practices and with the instructions he has received from the god of poetry, Apollo.[49] As relayed by Callimachus, their charges amount to the following (I paraphrase): lack of unity, lack of elevated subject matter, and lack of length, resulting in incoherent, whimsical, and short poems.

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[45] The Telchines are chthonic wizards (Hesych. *s.v.* Τελχῖνες associates their name with θέλγειν, to bewitch), connected with metallurgy, envious of sharing their professional knowledge, and generally linked with envy, spite and the evil eye (*Suda s.v.* Τελχῖνες, Ov. *Met.* 7.366). They brought up Poseidon on Rhodes (Diod. Sic. 5.55.3), which might be interpreted as providing a connection with Apollonius; except he was not of Rhodian origin, but went to Rhodes late in life. Presumably the epithet "Rhodian" was given after his death, to distinguish him from the later Alexandrian librarian also called Apollonius ("the Eidographer," cf. P. Oxy. 1241).

[46] Cf. Schmitz (1999: 162–163).

[47] Schmitz (1999: 163) uses the term "implied reader."

[48] For examples of this tactic, cf. e.g. Pi. *N.* 4.36–43; *P.* 1.81–85; *P.* 2.88-end; *O.* 2.87–88, cf. Lefkowitz (1981: 120–121).

[49] The epithet Lycius is relevant, since according to Serv. *Aen.* 4.377, it is linked with the god as destroyer of the Telchines. Apollo features as champion of Callimachus' poetics too in *Hymn* II, 105–113.

Callimachus' defense against this criticism is the following: you are just envious (7/8);[50] I know short poetry that is better than long poetry (examples, 9–16);[51] One should judge poetry by its craftsmanship, not by its length (17–18); don't expect loud and booming poetry; it is not my job (19–20). By accusing the Telchines of envy, he implies that their criticism is not based on aesthetics but rather on (professional) rivalry: they object to his success, rather than to his style. As Glenn Most has remarked with reference to Pindar's frequent mention of this emotion, "Envy is the necessary concomitant of great deeds; its presence is a proof of the greatness of outstanding success just as its absence is an indication of mere mediocrity."[52] This observation sheds an interesting light on the representation of the Telchines' judgment; actually, by implication, it reverses it. By claiming that the Telchines are envious of his poetic achievements, Callimachus wishes to make his readers think that he must be really good.

Reinforcing this indirect appeal, he addresses their unfair criticism by demonstrating that long poetry is not necessarily better than short poetry with examples from earlier elegiac poetry (Mimnermus, Philitas). Length (the Persian *schoenus*) is no criterion for judging poetry; craftsmanship (τέχνη) is. This claim is patently obvious, as it would be ridiculous to consider length a concern of literary criticism, but it also implies that Callimachus' poetry would fare well in an assessment of craftsmanship. Next, he says he will not "thunder like Zeus" (i.e., produce bombastic poetry),[53] implicitly connecting a bombastic style to the kind of poetry that the Telchines accuse him of not writing.

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[50] For the implication of jealousy in 8: τήκ[ειν] ἦπαρ ἐπιστάμενον, cf. Pfeiffer (1949: *ad loc.*), cf. also line 17, where the Telchines are addressed as the hateful children of Βασκανίη (the Evil Eye).

[51] The possible supplements to lines 9–12 are a veritable can of worms. I favor Cameron's reading, based on the remarks of Bowie (1986: 13–35): the poets referred to are Philitas and Mimnermus; their short poems appear to be contrasted favorably to their long ones.

[52] Most (2003: 139). Considering the frequency with which Callimachus refers to the envy his poetry has roused this is an important statement. E.g. *Hymn* II, 105–113 and. *AP* 7.525,4, where the coupling of Φθόνος (Envy) and Μῶμος (Blame) implies that any blame of Callimachus' poetry can only be the result of envy.

[53] Cf. Ar. *Ran.* 814 on Aeschylus' style; Ar. *Ach.* 530–531 on that of Pericles'. In itself thunder coming from Zeus is respectable; when it comes from someone trying to imitate him, it becomes hubristic. Callimachus thus implicitly accuses the Telchines of impious expectations.

It is noteworthy that Callimachus does not answer the remaining charges himself. The lack of unity and triviality of the subject matter are apparently harder to counter than the (absurd) claim that a poem should be long in order to be good.[54] And then divine authority is introduced: Apollo himself gave Callimachus two pieces of advice when he was young: "A sacrificial animal should be fat, but the Muse should be slender. Take the roads that are not open to all" (23–28). Both components are metaphorical and, suitably, coming from Apollo, slightly oracular. This indeterminacy of Apollo's guidance is purposeful. The opposition between the fat sacrificial animal and the slender Muse refers to the opposition between big and small poems. The adjective qualifying the Muse, λεπτός, moreover, is a keyword in Hellenistic poetic discourse[55] meaning not only "slim, thin" but also "refined, elegant, delicate." Similarly, πάχυς means "physically thick" as well as "(mentally) thick, obtuse, slow-witted."[56]

Although the poem did not start out with the idea that small equals refined and big equals unrefined *per se*, this is where Calllimachus has now maneuvered his readers: first purely quantitative terms, they have surreptitiously metamorphosed into qualitative terms or even metaphors on the authority of the god of poetry, Apollo.[57] In the second half of his reply, Apollo tells Callimachus not to enter the broad roads full of carriages, but to choose small, difficult paths.[58] This debated phrase seems to refer to what might be termed "originality" or the "avant-garde." Apollo's precept probably serves to justify Callimachus' "lack of unity;" "lack of serious subject matter" and "frivolity."[59] He legitimizes brevity

[54] Cf. the criticism of Φϑόνος in *Hymn* II, 105–113, where length is the single criterion too.

[55] The first to remark on this was Reitzenstein (1931: 23–70). For the topic of λεπτότης, see Ch. 5.2.

[56] Cf. Asper (1997: 135–153). The adjective returns in fr. 398 Pf., to characterize Antimachus' Lyde, cf. Krevans (1993: 149–161).

[57] Cf. Apollo's answer to Φϑόνος' criticism, *Hymn* II, 105–113. Here too greatness is linked with filth (the Assyrian river) and shortness with purity (springs of water from which offerings to Demeter can be fetched). Call. *AP* 9.566 links brevity with victory in dramatic contests. Cf. Asper (1997: 198).

[58] The image of the untrodden road as metaphor for refined if underestimated poetry returns in Call. *AP* 9.565. Asper (1997: 64–72) shows that the metaphor of the road does not derive from one particular poetic text, e.g. Pi. *Paean* 7b, as has often been claimed, or Hesiod *Op*. 290–292.

[59] He favors disjunctive and allusive narrative (e.g. Acontius and Cydippe, *Aetia* fr. 67–75 Pf.) chooses humble subjects (e.g. *Hecale*) and quaint angles (e.g. Molorchus'

by implying that it is equal to elegance and justifies the lack of unity and serious subject matter as "original and out of the ordinary," "following of the untrodden paths." A divine sanction thus rests on the poetics that Callimachus claims to embrace.

Now, Callimachus has put forward two points of view regarding poetry: that of the envious demonic Telchines and that of Apollo, god of poets. Even disregarding their views, this opposition does not represent a difficult choice. It is entirely justified that Callimachus should follow the latter ("Him I obeyed," 29 [τῷ πιθόμη]ν). He restates his credo for reinforcement: "We wish to sing among an audience that prefers the shrill sound of cicadas to the braying of asses" (29–30); "I would rather be a refined cicada than a puffed up ass, so that I might feed upon dew and shed old age" (31–36). Once more, the suggestion of small (cicada) versus big (ass) is connected to inherent positive or negative stylistic qualities, respectively, this time expressed through metaphors of sound.[60]

Finally, the poet professes that he is old and tired, but that it does not matter as long as he enjoys the sympathy of the Muses (37–38). With a nod to the Telchines, "no friends" of these goddesses (2), the text seems to have come full circle. After this, the fragment breaks off.

The arsenal of rhetorical strategies deployed to convince the addressees that Callimachus' is the only feasible kind of poetry is not mean: it consists of false oppositions, the aesthetics of exclusivity, the argument of authority, and the suggestion that the poet is envied for his excellence by malevolent creatures. Reviewing scholarship of the past, it appears this strategy has worked remarkably well in many cases. Callimachus has often been taken at his word as a lone warrior for the cause of good taste, threatened by insipid criticasters who prefer bombast and antiquated poetic forms.[61] Many have admired Callimachus' brave and lonely stance—and perhaps themselves for admiring him.

This circular admiration is exactly what Bourdieu describes with the term "distinction." The rhetoric of the *Aetia*-prologue creates a position of exclusivity not only for the author, but also for all who profess to enjoy his poetry. Distinction is impossible where there is no disagreement of tastes; therefore the Telchines, historical or not, are a welcome and

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invention of the mousetrap, fr. 54–59 Pf.). Harder suggests that "untrodden paths" refer to Callimachus' novel use of narratological devices in the *Aetia* (1990: 287–309).

[60] Asper (1997: 197–180).

[61] E.g. Ziegler (1934), Brink (1963: 71), Smotrytsch (1963: 249–256), Lohse (1973: 20–43).

necessary foil. They embody the positive aspect that Glenn Most finds present in otherwise despicable envy, "... the acrid smoke which may well sting our eyes but is nonetheless the irrefutable and hence not entirely unwelcome proof of the existence of the blazing fire of an almost superhuman success."[62]

4.6. *The Telchines and the* Lyde

As has been demonstrated, whether or not the Telchines existed in historical reality is a relatively unimportant issue for assessing the rhetorical strategies of the *Aetia*-prologue. What comes across perfectly without this certainty is the (deliberately constructed) image of an exclusive, elitist, and excellent poet who writes for a select readership appreciative of a level of sophistication inaccessible to the masses. Nevertheless, the identification of the Telchines has been attempted since antiquity and like the quarrel of Callimachus and Apollonius, deserves some comments here.

The fragmentary *Scholia Florentina* identify the Telchines as follows:

Διονυσίοις δυ[σ]ί, τῷ ελ̣
[ ]νι κ(αὶ) τῷ ἰ̈λ̣ειονι κ(αὶ) Ἀσκλη-
[πιάδῃ τῷ Σικε]λίδῃ κ(αὶ) Ποσειδίππῳ τῷ ονο
[ ].υϱίππῳ τῷ ῥήτοϱι κ(αὶ) Αν̣α̣
[ ]βῳ κ(αὶ) Πϱαξιφάνῃ τῷ Μιτυ-
[ληναίῳ, τοῖς με]μφομ(έν)ο[ι]ς αὐτοῦ τὸ κάτισ̣-
[χνον τῶν ποιη]μάτ(ων) κ(αὶ) ὅτι οὐχὶ μῆ̣κος ηϱ̣α ...
(PSI 11.1219, fr. 1 Pf.)

[It is aimed at *vel sim.*] the two Dionysii, the one known as ... and ... the (?)[63] one, and Asclepiades also known as Sicelidas, and Posidippus the ..., and the orator ... yrippus and Ana ... [Two fragmentary names] ..., and Praxiphanes of Mytilene, as the ones attacking the futility of his poems, and because [they have *vel sim.*] no length ...[64]

Because of the presence of Asclepiades and Posidippus, the reception of the elegiac poem *Lyde* of Antimachus (fifth-fourth century BCE) has generally been connected with this issue. These epigrammatists both praised the *Lyde* in their epigrams (*AP* 9.63; *AP* 12.168 respectively.),

[62] Most (2003: 139).
[63] See Pfeiffer on the possible adjective (1949: *ad loc.*).
[64] Apart from Asclepiades, Posidippus and Praxiphanes, it is impossible to identify the individuals named. Apollonius cannot be fitted into any of the lacunae, cf. Pfeiffer (1949: *ad loc.*), Fraser (1972: I, 747, 749, 750–751; II, 1052, n. 251).

while Callimachus ridicules it with a dig at Asclepiades' epigram (fr. 398 Pf.).[65] This has generally led to the conclusion that all Telchines must have been poets and critics who, like them, appreciated the *Lyde* and attacked Callimachus for writing elegiac poetry that did not conform to the example set by Antimachus.[66]

However, as has been most forcefully brought to the attention by Cameron,[67] the relationship between the *Scholia Florentina*, Asclepiades' and Posidippus' epigrams and Callimachus' fragment is unclear. The epigrams and fragment make it seem likely that Callimachus disagreed with Asclepiades and Posidippus about the merits of Antimachus' poetry. Yet, it is improbable that Callimachus named his opponents in the now lost parts of the *Aetia*, so the *Scholia Florentina* presumably arrived at their identification through educated guesswork. This was based on the epigrams, which indeed suggest that Callimachus had a literary disagreement with Asclepiades and Posidippus, and on Callimachus' now lost polemic treatise entitled *Against Praxiphanes*, which apparently also discussed the appreciation of the *Lyde*.[68]

The fact that the *Aetia* was an *elegiac* poem makes it inherently likely that any polemic in its prologue would indeed have concerned elegiac poetry, as the *Lyde* was.[69] So the idea of combining the information from the epigrams with the *Aetia* prologue is not so far-fetched, especially when Cameron's ingenious interpretation of Asclepiades' epigram on

[65] See Ch. 2.5.2. The *Lyde* was popular, as the epigrams of Asclepiades and Posidippus attest. The latter also wrote an epigram on a theme drawn from it (*SH* 703). Lyde also figures in Hermesianax fr. 7.41–46 Powell. Cameron (1995: 485–487) moreover wants to restore Λύδη in a corrupt epigram by Hedylus (Ath. 11.45.17–45) and Crates (*AP* 11.218) implies that Antimachus is better than Choerilus; however, see below on this epigram.

[66] Although other conjectures have been made, e.g. by Musti (1999) who (unconvincingly) relates the Telchines to the Homeric Sirens, and thus to Homeric epic.

[67] Cameron (1995: 236–387).

[68] See Brink (1946: 11–26) on the identity of Praxiphanes and the contents of this treatise, which apparently criticized Plato as a poor judge of poetry for liking Antimachus (fr. 589 Pf.); it also seems to have praised Aratus (fr. 460 Pf.). See further Pfeiffer (1968: 136), Fraser (1972: I, 749), Lefkowitz (1981: 126), Krevans (1993: 149–161) and Cameron (1995: 301–309).

[69] Cf. Krevans (1993: 149–161), Cameron (1995: 263–387). This is also implied by the fact that fr. 1 Pf. names the elegists Mimnermus and Philitas as models. The *Aetia* and the *Lyde* were probably both long elegiac poems consisting of interwoven shorter tales, written in a learned, bookish style. Antimachus was a scholar and editor of Homeric epic and in this aspect he seems to have been a kind of precursor of the Hellenistic poets, which may explain his popularity in this era. On Antimachus (fragments and *testimonia*) see Wyss (1936) and Matthews (1996).

the *Lyde*, *AP* 9.63 is taken into account. Here Lyde claims: "I am more exalted than any woman descended from Codrus, thanks to Antimachus" (τῶν δ' ἀπὸ Κόδρου / σεμνοτέρη πασῶν εἰμι δι' Ἀντίμαχον, 1–2). This likely refers negatively to Callimachus' character Cydippe (*Aetia* fr. 75.32 Pf.), who is "a woman descended from (the legendary Athenian King) Codrus," one of the few known to literature. The implication would be, then, that Asclepiades wrote his epigram (*AP* 9.63) not only to praise the *Lyde* but also to disparage the *Aetia*.[70]

All considered it seems probable that there was a contemporary debate on elegiac poetry, centering on the appreciation of Antimachus' *Lyde*. It is possible that this debate involved a comparison between the *Aetia* and the *Lyde*. Whether it was waged in Callimachus' *Aetia*-prologue remains unclear, but, if it were, it seems clear that Callimachus tried to trump it by presenting his attackers as insipid and envious demons and the poetics they defended as bombastic, vulgar and old-fashioned. In itself, the choice to address the question in his poetry shows his awareness of the benefits of what Bourdieu would later term "distinction." Through criticism (even of his own fabrication), his prestige paradoxically flourished.

4.7. *Callimachus'* Iambi

The text of the *Aetia*-prologue, though corrupt at places, allows the modern reader to follow the rhetorical strategies employed by Callimachus to persuade his audience of the validity of his poetic choices; the second *Hymn* (to Apollo) permits the same.[71] This is regrettably not always the case with the majority of the *Iambi*. Although some clearly engage in polemics on contemporary poetics, it is often difficult to ascertain what Callimachus actually wrote and even more so what he meant to convey. Sometimes the *diegeseis* are of some help, but the danger of reading one's own preoccupations into the *Iambi* rather than those of Callimachus looms large.[72] Complicating it further, the *Iambi* almost certainly

[70] Cameron (1995: 304–305).

[71] Cf. Williams (1971: *ad* 105–113).

[72] This is for instance the problem with Lelli's interpretations (2004). He often makes claims that are impossible to verify on the basis of the surviving material, e.g. that *Iamb.* 3 and 5 are meta-literary discussions, contrary to what the *diegeseis* state. Of *Iamb.* 3 remain only four complete lines (of at least 40), of *Iamb.* 5 twelve (of at least 70), cf. Pfeiffer (1949). Kerkhecker (1999) and Acosta-Hughes (2002) provide many useful insights on the *Iambi.*

constituted a poetry book assembled by Callimachus himself.[73] This means that the poems were presumably arranged in such a manner as to comment upon and enhance each other's meanings. It is hard, if not impossible, to reconstruct these interrelations—let alone the meanings they might have conveyed—with confidence from the scraps that survive.

What can, however, be guessed with some degree of certainty, and is indeed suggested by the theme of 1 (as discussed in Chapter 2), is that the quarrels of the Alexandrian *literati* must have formed a great theme of the collection. This also seems to emerge from the *diegeseis* in combination with the comparatively intact texts of *Iambi* 2 and 4 where a (jocular) verdict on some contemporary poets and their idiosyncrasies is being pronounced. *Iambus* 2 relates the fable of how humans received the voices of animals, naming some examples:

> Τἆλλα ζῷα ὁμοφώνει ἀνθρώποις, μέχρι κατὰ λύσιν γήρως ἐπ[ρέ]σβευσεν ὁ κύκνος πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ ἀλώπηξ τὸν Δία ἐτόλμησεν μὴ δικαίως ἄρχειν φάναι. ἔκτοτε δὲ εἰς ἀνθρώπους μετήνεγκεν αὐτῶν τὴν φωνήν, καὶ λάλοι ἐγένοντο· Εὔδημος δέ, φησίν, τὴν κυνὸς ἔσχε, Φίλτων δὲ ὄνου, παρεπικόπτων τούτους. (*Dieg.* fr. 192.22–31 Pf.)

> All the other animals spoke the same language as humans until the swan went on a diplomatic mission to ask the gods for the banning of old age and a fox dared to say that Zeus' rule was unjust. From that day, [Zeus] gave their voices to humans, and they became talkative. And Eudemus, [Callimachus] says, received the voice of a dog, and Philton of a donkey, to mock them.

The text of the *Iambus* itself further states that [unreadable name] received the voice of a parrot (fr. 192.11 Pf.) and the tragedians the voices of the animals in the sea (12). This presumably ridicules the persons involved as incapable poets, though it is not easy to establish the exact shades of the mockery.[74] The attribution of the fable to Aesop (fr. 192 Pf. 15–17) and the claim that his outspokenness caused him to receive a hostile reception in Delphi might imply (and self-referentially illustrate) that it is better to avoid taking responsibility for attacking rivals by name.[75]

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[73] Cf. Acosta-Hughes (2002), Kerkhecker (1999). However, it is not even certain whether the 13 *Iambi* we now possess formed the whole of the book.

[74] Cf. Acosta-Hughes (2002: 182–189).

[75] Cf. Ar. *Rhet.* 3.1418b28–33: the assuming of a mask if one wishes to say something unpleasant that may reflect badly on the speaker is typical of iambic poetry, cf. Ch. 2.2.2.

In *Iambus* 4, an unnamed speaker (according to the *diegesis*, the persona of Callimachus) addresses a certain Simos and, apparently to teach him a lesson, relates how an arrogant and aggressive laurel and a modest olive tree were once discussing who was best. The olive tree is on the point of winning when a bramble tries to intervene, saying "cease before we become objects of fun for our enemies." It is snubbed by the laurel.

> Διεφέρετο ὁ ποιητὴς πρός τινα τῶν ἐφαμίλλων· Σῖμος δέ τις παρατυχὼν παρυπέκρουεν ἄμφω παρενδεικνύμενος ἴσος εἶναι. Θρᾷκα δέ φησιν αὐτὸν καθεστάναι ⟨—⟩ παιδοκλέπτης ἐστί. καὶ γὰρ τὸν αἶνον παρατίθεται ἀκόλουθον, ὡς ἐν Τμώλῳ ⟨δάφνη καὶ⟩ ἐλαία διεφέροντο ὑπὲρ πρωτείων (παρεπεφύκεσαν δ' ἀλλήλαις), διεξῄεσαν δὲ τὰ προσόντα ἑαυταῖς χρήσιμα. ἐπὶ πλεῖον δὲ διαφερομένων ὑποτυχοῦσα βάτος παλαιά· "πέπαυθε πρὶν εἰ μὴ ἐ[π]ίχαρτοι ⟨τοῖ⟩ς δυσ[μ]ενέσι γενώμεθα" (π[αρ]επεφύκ[ει δ' αὐ]ταῖς). [πρ]ὸς ἣν ἀποβλέψασα [.........] ἡ δά[φν]η "ὦ κακὴ λώβη," φη[σίν], "⌊ὡς δὴ μ⌋ί' ἡμέ⌋ων καὶ σ⌊ύ;"...] (*Diegesis* VII/fr. 194 Pf.)
>
> The poet was arguing with one of his rivals; a certain Simos, who happened to pass, chided them, thus implying to be their equal. [Callimachus] calls him a Thracian ⟨...⟩ he is a stealer of boys. And indeed he adds the following fable, how in Tmolos a ⟨laurel and⟩ an olive tree were arguing about who was best (because they stood next to each other) and enumerated their useful qualities. When they continued arguing, an old bramble butted in: "Stop before we become the laughing stock of our enemies." (For it grew next to them). Looking down on it [...] the laurel says: "You wretch, so you too are one of us now, are you?"

At first glance, the moral of the fable recounted by the speaker to Simos seems to be: "Don't pretend to be able to judge an argument of your betters." Considering the *diegesis*, the subject of the poem may be literary polemic, although Simos is apparently also called a "stealer of boys" (cf. *diegesis*), which would rather point towards an erotic quarrel. Perhaps the two were even combined, but Arnd Kerkhecker rightly expresses his doubts on the matter:

> The *diegesis* does not specify the nature of the rivalry and it seems natural to accept the stock image of a Callimachus engaged in poetic feuds. And yet, precisely because this assumption is so natural, it could be mere guesswork. The text of the poem is almost complete and there is nothing to suggest a debate of poetic principles. The point of the quarrel is not spelt out. (Kerkhecker, 1999: 112)

It may be more rewarding to consider the structure of the poem and make sense of the rhetorical strategies employed in it. First, it should be asked which character in the fable represents the point of view of the

speaker. There is the striking fact that the aggressive laurel tree, which seems to lose the quarrel with the olive tree in the end,[76] almost literally echoes the words the speaker uses to snub his interlocutor Simos. The speaker's ironic question, "So you are one of us then, are you?" (Εἷς—οὐ γάρ;—ἡμέων; 1), attacks the presumption of Simos, who counsels against fighting amongst equals. In the laurel's words to the bramble in 102–103, it returns: "You wretch, so you too are one of us now, are you?" (ὦ κακὴ λώβη, ὡς δὴ μί' ἡμέων καὶ σύ;). Does this mean the speaker of the *Iambus* is to be equated with the laurel, the apparent loser of the quarrel? If so, the whole poem would appear to be an intricate form of self-irony on the part of the speaker, "Callimachus," who recognizes that all his quarrels can only end in self-defeat.[77]

The bramble seems wiser and more reasonable with its counsel against fighting amongst equals, and thus even resembles Hipponax as he was presented in *Iambus* I (cf. Chapter 2.2.2).[78] Is *his* perhaps rather the point of view that should be attributed to Callimachus the author? Finally, the ploy the olive tree uses to win the duel is to quote a conversation it allegedly overhears between two chattering birds in its leaves. In it, the achievements of the olive are praised and the laurel is disparaged.[79] This not only remarkably resembles the iambic practice of expressing personal opinions through a mask in order to avoid reaping the blame for them, which is what Callimachus did in *Iambus* 1 (by making Hipponax his mouthpiece, cf. Ch. 2.2.2) and in *Iambus* 2 (by attributing his own insulting remarks about other poets to Aesop). It is also reminiscent of the way Callimachus uses the authority of Apollo in the *Aetia*-prologue and *Hymn* II (105–113) to justify his own poetic choices.

All in all, what appears to become clear about the tactics of (literary?) feuding in the *Iambi* is that they are part of a teasing game of hide and seek, in which it is hard to pin down the speaker who pronounces the invective. The collection looks more like a self-conscious essay in the intricacies of (iambic) charade and a comment upon rhetorical strategies that Callimachus employs elsewhere than a serious attack on literary

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76 This seems to be the conclusion of the *Iambus*, but since the text is fragmentary this is not entirely certain.

77 Cf. Kerkhecker (1999: 115).

78 The parallelism of the poem implies that butting in in a quarrel of superiors may have been both the bramble's and Simos' "fault."

79 Beginning in line 61 and presumably continuing all through the speech of the olive, i.e., up to 90.

opponents. It is a meditation upon the rhetoric of making quasi authoritative poetic claims.

4.8. *Epigrams*

The characteristic uniting the remaining examples of blame and criticism found in this period is their focus on the way in which contemporary poets followed the example of a particular poetic model; this is the element singled out for criticism. Clearly it was considered important to be aligned with the right models, or, conversely, to follow these models in the right way. If a Hellenistic poet did not succeed in doing so, he was liable to grave criticism or even ridicule. Yet, as will appear, in many of these instances too, the social backgrounds of criticism and blame seem to play a role under the surface.

An epigram by Theodoridas of Samos criticizes his contemporary Mnasalcas' choice of models:

> Μνασάλκεος τὸ σᾶμα τῶ Πλαταιΐδα
> τῶ 'λεγηοποιῶ·
> ἁ Μῶσα δ' αὐτῶ τᾶς Σιμωνίδα πλάθας
> ἧς ἀποσπάραγμα
> † καινα τε καὶ γὰν † κἀπιλακυθίστρια
> †διθυραμβοχάνα†·
> τέθνακε, μὴ βάλωμες·εἰ δέ κε ζόεν,
> τύμπανόν κ' ἐφύση. (*AP* 13.21)[80]

> This is the tomb of Mnasalces son of Platais, the poet of elegy. His Muse was a chip off the block of Simonides and consisted of emptiness, clatter and dithyrambic hollering. He is dead, let us not throw stones; but if he would be alive … [obscure threat]

Despite the textual and interpretational problems, it is clear that this epigram condemns what was in the eyes of Theodoridas a specific literary fault of Mnasalcas. He is ridiculed as an uncritical epigone of Simonides who produced poetry in a bombastic style, full of ridiculous compounds—presumably imitated by the ones in the epigram itself. The main criticism is lack of originality. Similar accusations regarding the composition of *unoriginal* poetry are not frequently found in Hellenistic

[80] A note on the text: καινα τε καὶ γὰν was emended by Toup and Jacobs into "κενά τε κλαγγὰν," which is translated here. On line 8, cf. Page (1975): "*omnino non intellegitur; desideratur sententia* ἀπετυμπανίσθη ἄν."

literary criticism.[81] In general, imitation was not considered a bad thing, provided it added something to the model or modified it in some unexpected way. However, this was apparently what Mnasalces neglected to do, and this is why the author of the epigram thinks of him as (metaphorically?) dead and buried, and threatens him with obscure punishments in the last lines.

The following intriguing epigram of a certain Crates appears to address a similar issue with regard to the poetry and models of Euphorion:[82]

> Χοιρίλος Ἀντιμάχου πολὺ λείπεται· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν
> Χοιρίλον Εὐφορίων εἶχε διὰ στόματος
> καὶ κατάγλωσσ' ἐπόει τὰ ποήματα καὶ τὰ Φιλητᾶ
> ἀτρεκέως ᾔδει· καὶ γὰρ Ὁμηρικὸς ἦν. (*AP* 11.218)

> Choerilus is no comparison with Antimachus. Yet, Euphorion always had his mouth full of Choerilus and he made tongue-twisting poems and knew all about Philetas. No wonder, since he was a Homerist.

On a first reading, this epigram seem to focus on Euphorion's (wrong) choice in literary matters, favoring Choerilus over Antimachus as a model, and writing (overly) difficult poetry in the vein of the learned Philitas, presumably full of Homeric *hapax legomena*. However, as Gow and Page state, "Crates is interested in the names, not the identities of the poets,"[83] so that, as a literary statement, the epigram may not have made much sense in the eyes of contemporaries. There is a hidden (and rather insipid) meaning to the epigram: all the authors' names conceal obscene connotations.[84] Thus the name "Choerilus" is meant to convey a reference to χοῖρος (female genitals, cf. LSJ *s.v.* II), whereby the first phrase, especially εἶχε διὰ στόματος ("he had his mouth full of"), gains a completely different meaning. The name "Philitas," when connected in the poem with κατάγλωσσα ποήματα ("tongue-twisting poems"),[85] suddenly reveals its etymological link with the verb φιλῶ ("to kiss"). Even

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[81] Some instances are aimed more generally at the inadvisability of imitating Homer (cf. Ch. 2.5.1). Dioscorides praises Machon because he is not unoriginal, while reverting to the style of classical comedy (*AP* 7.708).

[82] Gow and Page (1965: II, 222): he was either the philosopher Crates of Mallus who was active, like Euphorion, at the Pergamene court of Antiochus, or a contemporary homonymous poet of epigrams, cf. Diog. Laert. 4.23.

[83] Gow and Page (1965: II, 222).

[84] Except, apparently, those of Antimachus and Euphorion, cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*).

[85] Normally meaning "full of recondite words" but here assuming an unexpected relation to the word for tongue-kissing (cf. LSJ *s.v.* καταγλωττίζω).

venerable Homer is brought into this obscene pun: his name is implied to be a composite of ὁμοῦ (together) and μηρός (thigh).[86]

What is the aim of this irreverence? Is it mere fun inspired by the chance combination of obscene connotations these poets' names happen to reveal when pressed? Or did Crates really mean to imply that the false etymologies, or puns, reveal a deeper truth about these poets, especially Euphorion?[87] Gow and Page think that the epigram mainly constitutes "an attack on Euphorion's morals" and is "damaging to his character." They just might be correct, since the epigram does not seem to aim at serious criticism of Euphorion's *poetic style* and there is no evidence that Euphorion wrote "licentiously" (Gow and Page ad *AP* 11.218,3). As Blomqvist phrases it, "The personal involvement of the author manifests itself in the fact that the real motive behind the attack is obscured by the actual contents."[88] In other words, as a literary attack it makes no sense, so there must have been personal reasons involved.

Considering Blomqvist's remark on the epigram, it is attractive to speculate about possible professional envy in order to interpret the attack. The poets involved in this particular example of mud-slinging both appear to have had a connection with the Pergamene court of King Antiochus, which, like Alexandria, could boast an important library and scholarly community. The *Suda* claims Euphorion was made director of the library by Antiochus, so perhaps this was a good enough reason for Crates to be envious.

Another epigram that looks like a reverent epitaph for this same Euphorion by his contemporary Theodoridas of Samos is usually read in a similar vein:

Εὐφορίων, ὁ περισσὸν ἐπιστάμενός τι ποῆσαι,
  Πειραϊκοῖς κεῖται τοῖσδε παρὰ σκέλεσιν.
ἀλλὰ σὺ τῷ μύστῃ ῥοιὴν ἢ μῆλον ἄπαρξαι
  ἢ μύρτον· καὶ γὰρ ζωὸς ἐὼν ἐφίλει. (*AP* 7.406)

Euphorion, who understood how to write brilliant poetry, lies by these Peiraic dams. But you must dedicate to the initiate a pomegranate or an apple or a myrtle. For when he was still alive he also loved these things.

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[86] The verb ὁμηρίζω is used with the same intended equivoque in Ach. Tat. 8.9.

[87] Whose name is not punned upon. Etymology and puns on poets' names are discussed in Ch. 7.

[88] Blomqvist (1998: 51). The intended allegation may be that Euphorion owed his wealth to Nicia, the wife of the King of Euboea (cf. *Suda s.v.* Εὐφορίων), who may be the "rich old woman" with whom he is said to have lived (Plut. *Mor.* 472D).

An actual literary feud between Euphorion and Theodoridas seems in fact supported by Clement of Alexandria's reference to Euphorion's "Writings aimed at Theodoridas" (πρὸς Θεωδορίδαν ἀντιγραφαί, *Strom.* 673P). This is what has induced scholars to see another scurrilous attack on Euphorion in the epigram.[89] Once more; the play is on the *double entendre* in apple and myrtle, attested as references to female genitals.[90] This is no real epitaph, then, but another attack on Euphorion's "morals." The fact that it "buries the author alive" may have been an additional joke.[91]

4.9. *Conclusion*

This chapter has aimed to show that envy, strife, and the wish for Bourdieuian "distinction" in the field of cultural production may be considered important motives for delivering or pretending to receive criticism and blame among colleagues in Hellenistic poetry. Because of his wish for distinction, Callimachus would presumably not even have been content if his intellectual and difficult poetry would have been instantly acceptable to everyone. This induced him to create a poetic persona in the *Aetia*-prologue that makes him appear like a threatened specimen, an elitist, misunderstood dissenter, fighting for a high aesthetic cause. Although it is not altogether implausible that some did indeed criticize his poetic choices, the fact that he chooses to elaborate upon it in the opening of a poem addressed to the court makes it clear that he at least intended to make the most of this—in all likelihood not very threatening—opposition.

Another matter is whether Callimachus quarreled with his pupil Apollonius. This can certainly not be proven on the basis of the evidence usually adduced. What does seem likely is that, if they did quarrel, it would have been due to poetic similarity and possibly professional rivalry, as both were employed in the Museum and presumably supported in their

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[89] Cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*).

[90] In all likelihood, the pomegranate also shares a similar connotation, although it is not attested as such, see Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*).

[91] At the time of writing Euphorion was presumably still alive, cf. the fact that the *Suda* names Syrian Apamea rather than Peiraeus as his burial site (Gow and Page 1965: II, 545). Gow and Page suggest Πειραϊκοῖς should be connected with πεῖρα, πειράομαι, πειράζω in their erotic sense. The same line may also refer to the word σκέλος (leg), since Euphorion apparently had ugly or crippled legs (κακοσκελής, cf. *Suda*).

poetical production by the monarch. The perception of this closeness in itself may even have led to the invention of the quarrel by later scholars. That Callimachus disagreed with Asclepiades and Posidippus about the appreciation of Antimachus' *Lyde* seems more likely. It would seem that here the generic closeness of the texts (long, learned elegies) inspired the (uncomplimentary) comparison between the two poets. Whether this also means that Asclepiades and Posidippus are necessarily to be identified amongst the Telchines attacked in Callimachus' *Aetia*-prologue is another question. As analysis of this text demonstrates, it is at least clear that the Telchines, whoever they may represent, are welcome foils, introduced to set the poet Callimachus apart and emphasize his (enviable) excellence.

When it comes to criticizing the choice of a contemporary's poetic models, several reasons may underlie the criticism. One epigram (*AP* 13.21) authentically attacks the choice of poetic models of a contemporary. The obvious point here is the unacceptable practice of insipidly following the classic models (Mnasalces is accused of being "a chip off the block of Simonides"). Clearly this is not a good thing; indeed, when looking at Hellenistic poetry in general, imitation for the sake of imitation is hardly found. Of course, this does not prove that Theodoridas' allegation was true to fact. Crates' epigram on Euphorion also appears to attack a particular aspect of the poetics of imitation (*AP* 11.218), the point of criticism being the choice of inferior (and perhaps too artificial and obscure) models. The real significance of the epigram (as supported by its counterpart by Theodoridas, *AP* 7.406) however reveals itself to be totally different: it is an allegation about Euphorion's sexual mores for wholly inscrutable and presumably personal reasons. It can be assumed that a personal feud was behind the quarrel; it charades as literary criticism, but involves no such thing.

All in all, it would appear that so-called aesthetic value judgments and the quarrels about them are not always what they seem in Hellenistic poetry. More often than not, unstated reasons for disagreement lurk behind the dismissal of another poet's poetic or aesthetic choices. Callimachus is the champion of exploiting—real or imagined—criticism; by incriminating his alleged detractors, he emerges triumphantly from the fray in the Muses' birdcage. The massive scholarship on Callimachus' quarrels is testimony to the effectiveness of his manipulative strategy.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRAISING CONTEMPORARIES

5.1. *Praised Poetics and Poetics of Praise*

The Alexandrian Museum may have been satirized as a "birdcage" full of squabbling birds, but animosity amongst contemporaries is not the whole story. Persisting in Timon's bird-metaphor, it might be said that the Hellenistic literary birds of a feather also often did what they are proverbially held to do, that is, "flock together." In other words, there are several instances of compliments and praise among contemporaries to be found. Surprisingly perhaps, this is unique: in pre-Hellenistic Greek poetry, it is virtually impossible to find explicit praise from a poet for a contemporary.[1] Either such poetry expresses or implies a *negative* evaluation of a contemporary or predecessor or it explicitly praises *predecessors*.[2] This may be explained by the fact that the eventual positive evaluation of poets derived from the success they enjoyed, which preserved them for the appreciation of later generations. A need for explication of this success was perhaps not strongly felt; it may have seemed self-evident.[3] In addition, it was easier to provide an opinion on the (well-known) poetry of the past. Praise of a contemporary has a different status than praise of a predecessor who has already entered the canon; for instance, it may be riskier (cf. the appreciation of Antimachus in Hellenistic poetry as discussed in Chapter 2). Assmann's theory of cultural memory (cf. Chapter 1.3) is once more relevant: whereas the value of what is recent and belongs to "living memory" is either still subject to discussion or considered unworthy of comment, what has receded into the venerable past

[1] See the collections of critical statements on poetry in e.g. Lanata (1963), Maehler (1963), Harriot (1969), Gundert (1978), Ford (2002).

[2] One example of pre-Hellenistic praise of a contemporary can be found in the epigram by Plato (if he is really the author) on Aristophanes (14 DK/*Vita Aristophanis*): Αἱ Χάριτες τέμενός τι λαβεῖν ὅπερ οὐχὶ πεσεῖται / ζητοῦσαι, ψυχὴν ηὗρον Ἀριστοφάνους. (The Graces, seeking a shrine that would not fall, found the soul of Aristophanes).

[3] On the elusive beginnings of ancient literary criticism in general, cf. Kennedy (1989: ix) Dover (1993: 33), Ford (2002: 1–3).

and become part of the established tradition may be used as a positive or negative point of reference.

As stated however, the situation in Hellenistic poetry was different. Examples of praise as well as criticism directed at contemporaries are preserved to an extent that is unequaled in earlier Greek literature. In this chapter, instances of Hellenistic poetic expressions of praise will be analyzed for what they reveal about their writers. Although they might seem to be no more than natural responses elicited by a satisfying work of art, the act of versifying praise in one's own poetry proclaims a feeling of allegiance to the praised poetics. Thereby, it throws light on the poetics of the praising voice itself. Praise, like blame, implies the choice of a position in the discourse on poetics and in the field of cultural production (cf. Chapter 4).

Even the bare fragments of a poem by Posidippus (AB 117/ 24 GP) tellingly suggest the dynamics at work in this kind of expressions of appreciation for fellow poets:[4]

> [ ] Μοῦσαι φίλαι, ἐστὶ τὸ γράμμα
> [τ]ῶν ἐπέων σοφίηι
> [τὸ]ν ἄνδρα—καί ἐστί [μ]οι ὥσπερ ἀδελφός—
> [ ]ν κάλ' ἐπισταμεν[.]ν

Here the work (τὸ γράμμα) of an unknown poet is praised (Austin suggests supplementing something like τοῦτ' Ἀσκληπιάδου *vel sim.* at the beginning of line 1), with an invocation of the Muses, which suggest that the poet named is their protégé. This poet is praised for the σοφίη (talent, wisdom, art) of his verse. Something like ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίγνωτον (Austin) should be supplemented in line 2, complimenting the work as eminently recognizable as the work of this master. In the final line the unknown poet is once more lauded as "a fine connoisseur" or some similar complimentary phrase focusing on his intellectual capacity.[5] If appearances do not deceive, this is an entirely positive appraisal of a fellow poet's work. This makes Posidippus statement in line 3, that this poet is "like a brother to him" interesting. Presumably this not only implies the affection that brothers are naturally supposed to feel for eachother, but also the proverbial family likeness, especially since both parties are poets. This would then imply that the praised poet is *very like* the one who praises him. The emphasis on σοφίη and connoisseurship

[4] Gow and Page (1966: 503) summarize: *laudatur amici poema.*

[5] Austin proposes ὡς ἕνα δεῖ τιμᾶν τῶν κάλ' ἐπισταμένων or ὑμνεῖτ' εὐλογίαις, τὸν κάλ' ἐπιστάμενον as possible supplements for the last line.

(2, 4) in this light gains special significance. Posidippus' authority to praise is underlined by it: if he is *like* a connoisseur-poet, that means he may by rights praise this brother-poet's work. There is a clear element of mutual reinforcement of authority in this claim.

5.2. *Praising the Old and the New*

Once more we also see that the discourse addressing tradition and innovation or even originality is closely related to the dialogue between contemporaries. Often the appreciation that poets show for their colleagues is dependent on their shared or opposing stance *vis à vis* the literary tradition. Thus, as we shall see in detail below, Callimachus praises Aratus (*AP* 9.507) for having written a Hesiodic song while choosing to select only the "sweetest" features of this poet (τὸ μελιχρότατον / τῶν ἐπέων ὁ Σολεὺς ἀπεμάξατο). In other words, Aratus' admirable feat is the modern refinement and amelioration of archaic practice. Not coincidentally, this practice is entirely in line with Callimachus' own poetic practice, as he implies in the *Aetia* (*Somnium*, fr. 3 + 4 Mass). Antiquarianism *per se* is not the merit of Aratus' or Callimachus' poetry, indeed, rather the opposite; it is the fact that they have proved themselves able of *renewing* Hesiod in unexpected or even generically different ways.

In *AP* 7.414, Nossis' epitaph on her contemporary and fellow South-Italian Greek Rhinthon of Syracuse, the inventor a dramatic sub-genre of tragic burlesques (*Phlyakes*), the emphasis on the originality of innovation is even stronger.[6]

> Καὶ καπυρὸν γελάσας παραμείβεο καὶ φίλον εἰπὼν *(1)*
> ῥῆμ' ἐπ' ἐμοί. Ῥίνθων εἴμ' ὁ Συρακόσιος,
> Μουσάων ὀλίγη τις ἀηδονίς· ἀλλὰ φλυάκων
> ἐκ τραγικῶν ἴδιον κισσὸν ἐδρεψάμεθα

> Pass by me laughing and saying a friendly word. I'm Rhinthon of Syracuse, a small nightingale of the Muses. But for my tragic *phlyakes* I earned my own ivy.

As Gutzwiller (1998: 85) suggests, this epitaph, besides complimenting Rhinthon, may also have served to reflect on Nossis' *own* claim of modestly contributing to the literary heritage of Magna Graecia, with the composition of her epigrams that were among the first to incorporate

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[6] According to the *Suda*, Rhinthon was born or lived under the first Ptolemy.

in the epigrammatic genre distinct elements of Sappho's lyric poetry (cf. Chapter 6). Nossis makes Rhinthon call himself Μουσάων ὀλίγη τις ἀηδονίς (*a small nightingale of the Muses*), implying that the stature of his poetry was unpretentious. (One might even consider that the fact that Rhinthon is surprisingly called ἀηδονίς, i.e. with the feminine form, supports this suggestion). Rhinthon's claim to fame is his originality, even if he only invented an inconspicuous genre, and even if this too is based upon traditional dramatic genres. We may note that this kind of emphasis on a personal, original achievement is very different from the way Theocritus presents his achievements, as discussed in Chapter 3: the latter poet never explicitly claims to have invented *a new genre*, but rather seeks to imply that his bucolic poetry stands in a long, if perhaps subliterary tradition. The similarity in both approaches to authorship of a new genre however in both cases lies in the acknowledgement that there *is* a link with tradition, whether this is underplayed (as in the Rhinthon-epitaph) or conversely, as in Theocritus' case boosted so much that we might even say it is *invented*. Both strategies ultimately aim at gaining the poet a particular kind of authority.

Still different parameters with regard to tradition determine the praise lavished on the contemporary dramatists Machon and Sositheus[7] by the prolific and baroque epigrammatist Dioscorides, whose *floruit* probably falls somewhat later than that of most of the other poets discussed here. He is one of the latest of the Alexandrian epigrammatists of the Ptolemaic period.[8] Many of Dioscorides' epigrams focus on the great poets of the past.[9] In itself, this does not necessarily imply that he had an exclusive taste for the antiquarian element in poetry,[10] but the themes of some of his epigrams do suggest this. Especially his series of epigrams on ancient poets of dramatic poetry reveals a nostalgic and historicizing approach

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[7] Sositheus was a dramatist of the Alexandrian *Pleiad*.

[8] Presumably at the end of the third century, rather than the beginning or middle, as Gow and Page argue on the basis of the epitaph for Machon, who died in 240 BC. (1965, II ad loc.). For the judgment that Dioscorides is very different from his older contemporaries, cf. Fraser (1972, I, 595).

[9] On Sappho (AP. 7.407), Anacreon (7.31), Thespis (7.410), Aeschylus (7.411), Sophocles (7.37), Archilochus (7. 351). Other epigrams showing an interest in matters of literary/cultural history are AP 7. 450, on Philaenis (the alleged female writer of an erotic handbook) and AP9.340, on Hyagnis, the inventor of the pipes. To these may be added the epitaphs on the contemporaries Sositheus and Machon, to be discussed in the main text.

[10] Cf. the series of epigrams on ancient poets attributed to Theocritus, or those of Leonidas.

to the origins of attic drama.[11] Praising Thespis as the inventor of the first rudimentary forms of drama (7.410), Dioscorides pays tribute to the austere greatness of Aeschylus and the classic harmony of Sophocles (7.411, 7.37). Remarkably enough, he then goes on to extol two *contemporary* dramatic poets, Machon and Sositheus. The sequence suggests a direct link between the ancient practitioners of the genre Aeschylus and Sophocles and their contemporary successor Sositheus: they form a *continuum* in Dioscorides' view. Perhaps significantly, Euripides, the most *modern* of the fifth-century Attic poets, who is often seen as a forerunner of Hellenistic or Callimachean aesthetics, is conspicuously absent from the list.[12] If the sequence is indeed meaningful, Machon and Sositheus are incorporated in a literary genealogy, which traces their works back to the remotest origins of tragedy and comedy (to Thespis, via Sophocles and Aeschylus). The substance of Dioscorides' praise makes it clear that the element he admires in their poetry is the exact *likeness* to the old masters, or even the conscious *return* to the practice of these old masters.

The twin epigrams on Sophocles and Sositheus (*AP* 7.37 and *AP* 7.707) illustrate this very clearly. They present two literary evocations of the tombs of these poets, designed to characterize the qualities of the buried poets:

Τύμβος ὅδ' ἔστ', ὤνθρωπε, Σοφοκλέος, ὃν παρὰ Μουσῶν
 ἱρὴν παρθεσίην ἱερὸς ὢν ἔλαχον·
ὅς με τὸν ἐκ Φλιοῦντος, ἔτι τρίβολον πατέοντα,
 πρίνινον ἐς χρύσεον σχῆμα μεθηρμόσατο
καὶ λεπτὴν ἐνέδυσεν ἁλουργίδα· τοῦ δὲ θανόντος
 εὔθετον ὀρχηστὴν τῇδ' ἀνέπαυσα πόδα.—
"Ὄλβιος, ὡς ἀγαθὴν ἔλαχες στάσιν· ἡ δ' ἐνὶ χερσὶ
 κούριμος ἐκ ποίης ἥδε διδασκαλίης;"—
Εἴτε σοὶ Ἀντιγόνην εἰπεῖν φίλον, οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις,
 εἴτε καὶ Ἠλέκτραν· ἀμφότεραι γὰρ ἄκρον.

[11] That this was intended as a series was first suggested by Wilamowitz (1913: 231); cf. Gabathuler (1937; 82–90) Gow and Page (1965: II, 251) are content to say that the epigrams are "related in theme." Fraser (1972, I, 599) and Gutzwiller (1998:23) suggest they were to be read as a sequence. On the peripatetic influence on his search for a *protos heuretes* in these poems see (Kleinguenther, 1931); Gabathuler (1937:82–90).

[12] Although it may of course, alternatively, be attributed to a deficiency in the transmission. However, considering the tone of the epigrams, it is not at all surprising to miss Euripides in the series. It is very possible that Dioscorides found little to admire in the innovative approach to tragedy that Euripides epitomized. See on this Fraser (1972: I, 600), Gow and Page (1965, II 254).

This, my dear fellow, is the tomb of Sophocles, whom I received as a holy charge from the Muses, being holy myself. It was he who put a golden costume and a purple cape on me, rough Phliasian as I was, still handling the threshing-sledge. Now that he is dead, I have stilled my foot, fit for dancing, here. "Lucky you are, to have gotten such a beautiful position. And that shorthaired girl-mask in your hands, from which play is it?" Whether you'd rather say it was Antigone or Electra, you wouldn't be wrong in either case, for both are top-notch.

Κἠγὼ Σωσιθέου κομέω νέκυν, ὅσσον ἐν ἄστει
   ἄλλος ἀπ᾽ αὐθαίμων ἡμετέρων Σοφοκλῆν,
Σκίρτος ὁ πυρρογένειος. ἐκισσοφόρησε γὰρ ὡνὴρ
   ἄξια Φλιασίων, ναὶ μὰ χορούς, Σατύρων
κἠμὲ τὸν ἐν καινοῖς τεθραμμένον ἤθεσιν ἤδη
   ἤγαγεν εἰς μνήμην πατρίδ᾽ ἀναρχαΐσας,
καὶ πάλιν εἰσώρμησα τὸν ἄρσενα Δωρίδι Μούσῃ
   ῥυθμόν, πρός τ᾽ αὐδὴν ἑλκόμενος μεγάλην
†εὔαδέ μοι θύρσων τύπος αὖ χερὶ† καινοτομηθεὶς
   τῇ φιλοκινδύνῳ φροντίδι Σωσιθέου.

And I in turn, Skirtos of the tawny beard, adorn the body of Sositheus, just like in the city my relative adorns Sophocles. For this man bore ivy worthy of the Phliasian Satyrs, yes by the chorus, and by reverting to ancient practice he caused me, who had already been turned to new ways, to remember my native place, and I injected a masculine rhythm into the Dorian Muse once more, drawn to magniloquence/raised to high repute. †The beating of the Thyrsus in my hand once more pleased me (?)† fashioned anew by the venturous genius of Sositheus.

Although some lines of this latter epigram are corrupt, it seems very clear that Sositheus is praised as an imitator of Sophocles. Indeed, his exact *imitation* of Sophocles makes Dioscorides regard him as a poet of the same stature and importance.[13] Just as the satyrs, who purportedly guard the tombs of these poets are relatives (αὐθαίμων ἡμετέρων, *AP* 707.2),[14] both stemming from Phlius,[15] so the poets buried underneath their monuments should be regarded as "brothers" (cf. for the

[13] Cf. Fraser (1972, I, 601).

[14] In reality, it would seem that Sophocles' tomb was not in the city at all, but at Decelea (?) and was moreover crowned by a Siren, as the ancient *Vita* tells us. This makes it inherently unlikely that the tomb of Sositheus as described here should be regarded as "real." The sequence is clearly intended as a book-sequence (Bing, 1988). Wilamowitz (1913: 231) even suggested that the poems were originally accompanied by illustrations.

[15] It is clear that Dioscorides regards Phlius, an Argive city, as the home ground of satyrical drama, from which, apparently, according to Dioscorides, drama derived. Cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, 254), who refer to the *Suda* for this information.

brother theme Posidippus AB 117 quoted above). Sophocles is called "holy" and is apparently praised for having wrought changes in the attire of the satyrs (this may metaphorically signify that he changed the status of satyr drama, elevating its topics or language).[16] Sositheus in turn is praised for reverting, apparently after a break with the past that occurred after Sophocles (5, ἐν καινοῖς τεθραμμένον ἤθεσιν ἤδη; we must presumably think here of Euripides), to the old practice (6, ἤγαγεν εἰς μνήμην πατρίδ' ἀναρχαΐσας). It is telling that Sositheus' return to old practices is at the same time considered an *innovation* (9–10, καινοτομηθεὶς / τῇ φιλοκινδύνῳ φροντίδι Σωσιθέου). This implies that whatever came between Sophocles and Sositheus is considered old-fashioned and dull, whereas a return to hardcore classical drama is now daring and innovative.[17] This forms another striking illustration of how the "floating gap" in collective memory, as postulated by Vansina and Assmann, works in practice: the distant past is favored as point of departure over the recent past; history becomes a figure all head and feet, with no body in between.

A comparable sentiment informs the epitaph for Machon, the comic poet from Alexandria, praised for having brought to Egypt the true spirit of Attic (Old) Comedy (*AP* 7.708):

Τῷ κωμῳδογράφῳ, κούφη κόνι, τὸν φιλάγωνα
  κισσὸν ὑπὲρ τύμβου ζῶντα Μάχωνι φέροις·
οὐ γὰρ ἔχεις κύφωνα παλίμπλυτον, ἀλλά τι τέχνης
  ἄξιον ἀρχαίης λείψανον ἠμφίεσας.
τοῦτο δ' ὁ πρέσβυς ἐρεῖ· "Κέκροπος πόλι, καὶ παρὰ Νείλῳ
  ἔστιν ὅτ' ἐν Μούσαις δριμὺ πέφυκε θύμον."

Light Earth, bear the living ivy that loves competition on the tomb for Machon. For you do not entomb a frequently-washed dress, no, you envelop remains worthy of the old art. The old man will say this: City of Cecrops, sometimes, pungent thyme grows with the Muses' inspiration along the Nile as well.

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[16] Gow and Page (1965: 255) remark that possibly Dioscorides thought, like Aristotle (*Poet*. 1449 a 20), that drama developed from Satyr-play.

[17] In an article on epigrams of the age of Callimachus related to drama (esp. Asclepiades *AP* 6.308, Callimachus *AP* 6.310, 6.311, 9.565, 9.566, 11.362) Fantuzzi (2005: 69–88) argues that Callimachus regarded drama as a form of literature prone to boring repetition of well-known topics from the classical era. Interestingly, this sentiment seems to have changed by the time of Dioscorides, although this poet may of course represent an isolated case; he is an unconventional author in other topics too. For more on Callimachus and drama, see below.

Just as in the epigrams on Sophocles and Sositheus, we find an emphasis on the place of origin of the old art, Attica (τέχνης … ἀρχαίης). This art is being transported over the sea to a new home in the land of the Nile. The proud address to the "City of Cecrops" and the description of comic poetry as "pungent thyme" denote the particularly contingent and sharp spirituality of the Old Comedy from the age of Aristophanes. Once more, then, the intervening era of Menander's New Comedy falls outside Dioscorides interest; he reverts to emphatically pre-Hellenistic models. Machon's *chreiai*, or anecdotes, which are preserved by Athenaeus, show that this poet's scurrilous attacks are aimed predominantly at contemporary characters, or individuals of the recent past, mostly kings, courtiers, and famous gluttons, drinkers, cooks and hetaeras. Though the lowlier of these personages perhaps call to mind the stock characters of New Comedy, the piquancy of the anecdotes may have lain in the fact that they related to *real* individuals, as was the case in Old Comedy.

Dioscorides explicitly denies that a return to the old model should lead to dull plagiarism (οὐ γὰρ ἔχεις κύφωνα παλίμπλυτον). Perhaps this assertion addresses a risk he was aware of, or even counters existing criticism of Machon. Reflecting his fresh and original spirit, Machon's tomb deserves *living* ivy (κισσὸν ὑπὲρ τύμβου ζῶντα Μάχωνι φέροις). His Old Comedy in the vein of Aristophanes is alive, inspired by the Muses (ἐν Μούσαις), even if transplanted to a different context (καὶ παρὰ Νείλῳ). Alexandria is the new Athens, thanks to Machon, the modern classic.

As noted in Chapter 1, such praise for the literary glories of classical Athens is hard to find in the poetry of the generation prior to Dioscorides. Indeed, it seems that Dioscorides exemplifies how, paradoxically, at the end of the third century *avant-garde* meant a return to the poetry of the classical age. This poetry had received little attention in the works of the preceding generation, which as we saw, looked back rather at the archaic literary traditions of lyric and epic.[18] Dioscorides, then, presents us with a spectacular, if perhaps isolated, instance of the so-called floating gap.

5.3. *Reading the Signs in Aratus'* Phaenomena

A striking exception to the universal posited above, Aratus' *Phaenomena*, a didactic poem in archaic language dealing with the heavenly

[18] Cf. Fraser (1972, I, 601, with n. 361).

bodies, became an instant classic immediately after appearing.[19] Aratus presents his poetic venture as a way of translating the omnipresent signs of Zeus (especially the heavenly bodies) into language comprehensible to humans. Possibly as early as Aratus' own lifetime, the *Phaenomena* had already become so popular they were even read in schools.[20] This may come as a surprise, since, as Neil Hopkinson (1988: 138) politely puts it, "many modern readers find the *Phaenomena* unexciting."

The *raison d'être* of the poem was a royal request. King Antigonus Gonatas of Pella in Macedonia had asked Aratus to versify a prose treatise by Eudoxus of Cnidus, an astronomer. This treatise was called either *Katoptron* (*Mirror*) or *Phaenomena*. When Aratus had finished, the monarch reputedly punned: "εὐδοξότερον ποιεῖς τὸν Εὔδοξον ἐντείνας τὰ παρ' αὐτῷ κείμενα μέτρῳ." (You make Eudoxus even more famous, now that you've versified his material).[21]

Contemporary expressions of admiration reveal the presumable reason for the *Phaenomena*'s popularity. The three Hellenistic epigrams in praise of it all focus on its elegance or refinement, using forms and compounds of the adjective λεπτός.[22] This is no coincidence, since Aratus himself had apparently called one of his (no longer extant) poetic anthologies Κατὰ λεπτόν (*SH* 108–109). He moreover alludes to the

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[19] For its popularity, cf. the contemporary epigrams of praise (below) and the later Latin translations and commentaries (Cicero, Germanicus, Avienus; a distinct influence of *Phaen.* 758–1152 on Vergil's *G.* 1.351–460). Callimachus moreover praises Aratus in his prose treatise Πρὸς Πραξιφάνην (*Vit. Arat.* 1 = *Schol. Vet. in Arat.* 9.8 Martin = fr. 460 Pf.), cf. Sale (1965: 160–164).

[20] The oldest papyrus of the *Phaen.* (v. 480–494), *P. Hamb.* 121 (first half second cent. BCE), is an anthology for use in the schools, cf. Fantuzzi in *DNP* (*s.v.* Aratus).

[21] Cf. *Vit. Arat.* 1.8.5–10. *Phaen.* 19–757 is based on Eudoxus; the meteorological part (*Phaen.* 758–1154) is related to a Pseudo-Theophrastean treatise (Περὶ Σημείων, *On Wheather Signs*).

[22] The epigrams are *AP* 9.507, by Callimachus; *AP* 9.25 by Leonidas and *SH* 712 = *Vit. Arat.* 1.10.4–7 by "King Ptolemy." On the former two epigrams see below; the latter epigram runs: Πάνθ' Ἡγησιάναξ τε καὶ Ἕρμιππος ⟨τὰ⟩ κατ' αἴθρην / τείρεα καὶ πολλοὶ ταῦτα τὰ φαινόμενα / βίβλοις ἐγκατέθεντο †ἀπὸ σκοποῦ δ' ἀφάμαρτον† / ἀλλ' ὅ γε λεπτολόγος σκῆπτρον Ἄρατος ἔχει. (Hegesianax and Hermippus and many others put the heavenly bodies, those constellations, in books †and missed the mark, but Aratus of the subtle discourses holds the scepter). It is unclear which Ptolemaic king is meant; he receives the sobriquet *Physkōn* (Potbelly). Fraser (1972: II, 1090, n. 459) and Gabathuler (1937: 94–95) think this is *not* a contemporary of Aratus, since they date Hegesianax (line 1) *after* Aratus. Page (1981: 84) and Cameron (1995: 323) however think it must be Ptolemy Philadelphus.

quality of λεπτότης (refinement) with the acrostic λεπτή in *Phaen.* 783–787, a passage describing the appearance of the moon:[23]

> **Λεπτὴ** μὲν καθαρή τε περὶ τρίτον ἦμαρ ἐοῦσα
> **Ε**ὔδιός κ' εἴη, **λεπτὴ** δὲ καὶ εὖ μάλ' ἐρευθὴς
> **Π**νευματίη· παχίων δὲ καὶ ἀμβλείῃσι κεραίαις
> **Τ**έτρατον ἐκ τριτάτοιο φόως ἀμενηνὸν ἔχουσα
> **Η**ὲ νότου ἀμβλύνετ' ἢ ὕδατος ἐγγὺς ἐόντος. (*Phaen.* 783–787)
>
> If she is slender and clear about the third day, she will bode fair weather; if slender and very red, wind; if the crescent is thickish, with blunted horns, having a feeble fourth-day light after the third day, either it is blurred by a southerly or because rain is in the offing. (transl. Kidd)

This passage constitutes a double proclamation of the ideal of λεπτότης. It spells the word Λεπτὴ in the acrostic and thus illustrates exactly what this ideal implied: the subtle and able versification that allowed the double (or triple) incorporation of the word.[24] The text thus also shows that Aratus expects the reader to read so carefully as to notice the acrostic.

As is well known, the word λεπτός and its cognates are of crucial importance in the critical discourse in Hellenistic poetry, as for instance its prominent position in Callimachus' prologue to the *Aetia* (fr. 1 Pf. 11–12 and 24–25) demonstrates.[25] Although it is unclear whether Callimachus or Aratus was first to use the adjective in a meta-poetic sense in Hellenistic poetry, the connection between the two poets is undeniably

[23] This interpretation is not accepted by Jacques (1960: 48–50), who explains the acrostic as a reference to the (accidental) acrostic in the opening lines of *Il.* 24: λευκή. However, since Aratus named a collection of his own poetry Κατὰ λεπτόν, it seems hard to believe he was not aware of the meta-poetic significance of the word. *Phaen.* contains one other certain acrostic (802–806): ΠΑΣΑ, identified by Levitan (1979: 55–68). Hutchinson (1988: 215 n. 4) thinks that still another may have been attempted unsuccessfully at 808–812: ΣΕΜΕιΗ (the diphthong Ει- opens the fourth line); he reads this as a neuter plural. Bing (1990: 281, n. 1) suggests taking it as *fem. sing.* and reading all the acrostics together as: ΛΕΠΤΗ ΠΑΣΑ ΣΕΜΕιΗ. On acrostics in antiquity in general, see Courtney (1990: 3–13).

[24] Cf. Cicero on Ennius' acrostic: *tum vero ea quae acrosticis dicitur, cum deinceps ex primis versus litteris aliquid conectitur, ut in quibusdam Ennianis Q. ENNIUS FECIT.* Id certe magis est attenti animi quam furentis. (Cic. *De div.* II 111, emphasis added).

[25] Cf. Ch. 4.5. Cameron (1995: 23) adds that *Phaen.* 783–787 contains two other words that frequently return in Callimachean critical or meta-poetic contexts: καθαρή (*AP* 9.566; *Hymn* II, 105–113) and παχίων (fr. 398 Pf.; fr. 1 Pf.). Other occurrences of λεπτός in Callimachus are hard to interpret: *Hymn* III, 243; *Iamb.* fr. 197.42 Pf.; *Lyr.* fr. 228.14 Pf.; *Hec.* frs. 254; 274; fr. *incertae sedis* 383.15 Pf. On the importance of λεπτός as a critical term in Hellenistic poetry, see e.g. Reitzenstein (1931: 23–70), Cameron (1995: 324–328; 330–331; 488–493); Asper (1997: 135–199).

present.[26] Apart from the question of priority, it is evident that λεπτότης was perceived as a central quality of Aratus' poem, as the epigrams in its praise illustrate. They deserve a detailed analysis, starting with a complex epigram of Callimachus:

Ἡσιόδου τόδ' ἄεισμα καὶ ὁ τρόπος· οὐ τὸν ἀοιδὸν
ἔσχατον, ἀλλ' ὀκνέω μὴ τὸ μελιχρότατον
τῶν ἐπέων ὁ Σολεὺς ἀπεμάξατο. χαίρετε, λεπταὶ
ῥήσιες, Ἀρήτου σύντονος ἀγρυπνίη. (*AP* 9.507)

> This song and its style are Hesiod's; not that the man from Soloi [has imitated] the poet entire, although it must be admitted that he has imitated the sweetest part of his verses. All hail, refined discourses, product of Aratus' intense sleeplessness.[27]

Aratus is apparently praised as a ζηλωτὴς Ἡσιόδου (emulator of Hesiod):[28] the *Phaenomena* are a Hesiodic song (ἄεισμα) in an improved Hesiodic style (τρόπος). Indeed, the poet is complimented for not imitating Hesiod entire, but only the sweetest part of his poetry. Callimachus' salutation of the work of Aratus as the product of "intense sleeplessness" appears to point both to long night hours of deep concentration necessary for the production of such a polished and learned poem and to the expectation that an astronomical poem like the *Phaenomena* would have been written at night in order to observe the stars.[29] Since Aratus was

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[26] Cameron (1995: 325): Callimachus borrowed the term from Aratus. *Contra* Jacques (1960: 53); Schwinge (1986: 15–16); Bing (1990: 282). Ultimately, the term would seem to derive from fifth cent. poetic/intellectual discourse, e.g. Ar. *Av*. 318, *Acharn*. 445, Plato *Resp*. X 607b, as Reitzenstein (1931: 25–30) points out.

[27] Some notes on the text and on the translation: I follow—where possible—the original MS reading of the *AP*, without the conjectures of Scaliger, Ruhnken and Blomfield. My translation of line 1 follows Cameron (1995: 223), who translates οὐ τὸν ἀοιδὸν / ἔσχατον as: "not the poet entire." Contrast e.g. Wilamowitz (1924: I, 206) and Reitzenstein (1931: 42), who translate οὐ τὸν ἀοιδῶν ἔσχατον "not the best of poets," i.e., not Homer. For ἀπομάσσομαι (3) meaning "to imitate, to model," cf. e.g. *AP* 9.594 on a portrait of Socrates, and LSJ *s.v.* απομάσσω III, *Med*. The phrase ἀλλ' ὀκνέω μὴ (2) is problematic and very rare, cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*) who propose: "it must be admitted that" or "although." On the phrase σύντονος ἀγρυπνίη, see Lohse (1967: 379–381) and Hose (1994: 196–199).

[28] So *Vit. Arat*. 1.5, discussing the question whether Aratus followed Homer or Hesiod. Perhaps this is a reference to the astronomical works attributed to Hesiod in antiquity (DK Hes. frs. 1–8). A more general reference to the style and didactic mode of *Op*. and *Theog*. is also possible. The remark has greatly influenced modern interpretation of the epigram, esp. the phrase τὸν ἀοιδὸν / ἔσχατον, on which see previous note.

[29] Cf. Cinna fr. 11 as cited by Pfeiffer (1953 app. crit.): *Haec tibi Arateis multum invigilata lucernis carmina*.

no true astronomer but depended on Eudoxus for his astronomical facts, this ambiguity is pointed and humorous.[30]

As Bing was first to point out, the expression λεπταὶ / **ῥήσιες** (3/4) reveals that Callimachus has not only noticed the acrostic ΛΕΠΤΗ in *Phaen.* 783–787, but also identified a surprising pun at the opening of this poem.[31] The opening lines of the *Phaenomena* read: Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, τὸν οὐδέποτ' ἄνδρες ἐῶμεν / ἄρρητον. (Let us begin from Zeus, whom we mortals never leave unmentioned). At first sight, ἄρρητον (unmentioned, unfamed) constitutes an allusion to the opening of Hesiod's *Opera et Dies* (ῥητοί τ' ἄρρητοί τε, 4, cf. below), the recognized poetic model of the *Phaenomena*:

> Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν, ἀοιδῇσι κλείουσαι,
> δεῦτε Δί' ἐννέπετε, σφέτερον πατέρ' ὑμνείουσαι.
> ὅν τε διὰ βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ὁμῶς ἄφατοί τε φατοί τε,
> ῥητοί τ' ἄρρητοί τε Διὸς μεγάλοιο ἕκητι. (*Op.* 1–4)

> Muses of Pieria, singing your lays, come here and tell of Zeus, hymning your father, through whom all men on earth are spoken of or left in silence, famed or unfamed, through the will of mighty Zeus.

However, the word also puns on the name of the author, Aratus, by connecting his own name (Ἀράτος / Ἀρήτος) to the root ῥη-, (to speak) through paronomasia. The adjective ἀρρητός can be read as a "variant" of this name. By punning in this way, Aratus once again, in a more subtle way, alludes to a feature of Hesiod's *Opera et Dies*. For in this subtext, a similar "etymology" is constructed, namely on the name of Zeus (root Δι-), the god "through whom" (ὅν τε **διὰ / Διὸς** μεγάλοιο ἕκητι) everything happens.[32] The intertextual allusions thus convey both that the *Phaenomena* stem from the *Opera et Dies* and that the poet Aratus—like his subject, the heavenly bodies—is who he is because of Zeus (*Op.* 4). Calling himself one of the ἄρρητοί, the "unfamed/unmentioned,"[33]

[30] Cameron (1972: 169–170), Hopkinson (1988: 137–138).

[31] Bing (1990: 281–285).

[32] Cf. West (1978: 139) on this passage.

[33] For the meaning of the adjective, *Schol.* 3a: ὅν τε διὰ βροτοί: ἤτοι δι' ὅντινα τρόπον οἱ ἄνδρες, οἱ ὁμοίως πάντες βροτοὶ καὶ φθαρτοὶ ὄντες, οἱ μὲν ἐκ τούτου εἰσὶν ἄφατοι καὶ ἀνονόμαστοι, οἱ δὲ φατοὶ καὶ ὀνομαστοὶ πανταχοῦ, ὁμοίως ῥητοὶ καὶ ἔνδοξοί τινες τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἄλλοι δὲ ἄρρητοι καὶ ἄδοξοι καὶ μηδόλως ὀνομαζόμενοι καὶ φημιζόμενοι διὰ τὸ ταπεινόν. (That is, for what reason men, who are all human and mortal, partly, stemming from him, are of no concern and unnamed, while others are famed and of great repute everywhere, and likewise, some people are named and famous, and other unnamed and unknown and nowhere mentioned or named, because of their unimportance). Cf. also *scholia* 3b–4a.

Aratus modestly suggests that he declines fame while paradoxically hinting at his own name at the same time.

Callimachus, in his praise of the *Phaenomena*, points to Aratus' pun in two ways. First his epigram uses the uncommon "Ionic" form of the author's name, Ἀ**ρή**του, which is deliberately saved for the last line.[34] Secondly, the epigram also alludes to it by calling the *Phaenomena* "λεπταὶ / **ῥή**σιες," once more playing on the root ῥη-. This expression stands out as an odd way of referring to a work of poetry.[35] By pointing at these refinements in the *Phaenomena*, Callimachus clarifies what "imitating the sweetest part of Hesiod's verse" (2–3) amounts to: the opening lines of the *Phaenomena* show a truly refined reworking of *Op.* 1–4. They refer to Hesiod and his pun on Zeus by punning on the name of the author, Aratus, while paradoxically omitting it. Truly, Hesiod pales in comparison.

Callimachus was not the only one to spot both of these intricacies in the *Phaenomena*; the contemporary epigrammatist Leonidas of Tarentum alludes to them too:[36]

Γράμμα τόδ' Ἀρήτοιο δαήμονος, ὅς ποτε λεπτῇ
φροντίδι δηναιοὺς ἀστέρας ἐφράσατο,
ἀπλανέας τ' ἄμφω καὶ ἀλήμονας, οἷσι τ' ἐναργὴς[37]
ἰλλόμενος κύκλοις οὐρανὸς ἐνδέδεται.
αἰνείσθω δὲ καμὼν ἔργον μέγα, καὶ Διὸς εἶναι
δεύτερος, ὅστις ἔθηκ' ἄστρα φαεινότερα. (*AP* 9.25)

This is the writing of learned Aratus, who once with subtle intellect showed where to find the primeval stars, the fixed and the moving both, in whose circles the bright revolving heaven is bound. He must be praised as one who has perfected a great work, and let it be said that he comes next after Zeus, he who has made the stars brighter.

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34 Contrast the spelling in the epigram of Ptolemy and the *Vitae*, cf. Cameron (1995: 322–323).

35 The juxtaposition of the allusions to the acrostic and the pun on Aratus' name suggests that both may have been read as instances of *sphragis*, i.e., of Aratus' personal mark on the poem. LSJ *s.v.* ῥῆσις only gives instances of the word as referring to speech or prose. Perhaps the pun (ῥῆσις–ἄρρητον–Ἀρήτου) is moreover echoed by one on *Hesiod's* name (Ἡσιόδου–ἄεισμα–ἀοιδὸν), cf. Bing (1990: 283, n. 3), since this may in antiquity have been etymologized as deriving from ἱέναι ἀοιδήν, cf. West (1966 ad *Th.* 22) and Nágy (1979: 96–97).

36 Cf. Bing (1990: 281–285). The question is whether Leonidas is imitating Callimachus' epigram. Cameron (1995: 323) denies the connection between Callimachus and Leonidas.

37 Beckby's text reads οἷσιν ἐναργὴς (3), which Gow and Page consider incomprehensible. They suggest following Kaibel's conjecture, which is printed here.

Here, the expression λεπτῇ / φροντίδι refers to Aratus' acrostic ΛΕΠΤΗ. The final verses of the epigram (αἰνείσθω … Διὸς εἶναι / δεύτερος) once more points to the pun in *Phaen.* 2: Aratus is "second to Zeus" figuratively as well as literally. In one sense, Zeus put the stars in the heavens as signs for mankind and Aratus made them comprehensible;[38] in another, Aratus' name (once more referred to in the Ionic form, 1) comes *after* that of Zeus in *Phaen.* 2. Leonidas contrives yet another pun in the conclusion of the epigram (6). It centers on the title *Phaenomena*, implying that Aratus has made the stars "brighter" or "more apparent" (φαεινότερα) by writing about them. This could mean both that Aratus' explanation makes the names and effects of constellations devised by Zeus "more comprehensible" and that the *Phaenomena* of Eudoxus, on which Aratus based his own poetry, have now become "better known" (φαεινός is the Greek equivalent of Latin *clarus*).[39]

What is the aim of all these allusions? Both Leonidas and Callimachus wish to demonstrate that they are clever readers of a clever poem. They go to some lengths to show that they understand the message conveyed by the *Phaenomena*, namely that "signs" should be noticed.[40] For indeed, this is the primary theme of the *Phaenomena*: the constellations are set in the heavens by Zeus as signs to be used by humans (especially farmers and seamen) who, if they "read" them correctly, will greatly benefit from their message. On a poetic level, Aratus enacts this message by incorporating subtle signs, such as acrostics and puns designed to be noticed by the reader, in his text. Callimachus and Leonidas, in turn, align their epigrammatic poetry with the poetry of the admired and praised Aratus, the paragon of λεπτότης, by including their own "signs" in the form of references to Aratean puns and acrostics.[41]

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[38] Cf. especially the programmatic passages in *Phaen.* 5–6: Ὁ δ' ἤπιος ἀνθρώποισι / δεξιὰ σημαίνει. (And in friendly manner he points out to mankind the favourable signs); *Phaen.* 15–16: Ἐμοί γε μὲν ἀστέρας εἰπεῖν / ᾗ θέμις εὐχομένῳ. (In answer to my prayer to tell of the stars in so far as I may, guide all my singing).

[39] Cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, 396), who refer to the pun allegedly contrived by Antigonus: "εὐδοξότερον ποιεῖς τὸν Εὔδοξον."

[40] Cf. Bing (1990: 285) quoting *Phaen.* 1101–1103: Οὕτω γὰρ μογεροὶ καὶ ἀλήμονες ἄλλοθεν ἄλλοι / ζώομεν ἄνθρωποι· τὰ δὲ πὰρ ποσὶ πάντες ἑτοῖμοι / σήματ' ἐπιγνῶναι καὶ ἐς αὐτίκα ποιήσασθαι. (So it is that we suffering restless mortals make a living in different ways; but all are only too ready to recognize signs that are right beside us, and adopt them for the moment, transl. Kidd).

[41] This may be connected with the fact that both epigrams seem to be conceived as tags appended to the actual scrolls of the *Phaen.* (note the recurrent deictic pronoun τόδε): they propose and enact a mode of interpretation to the reader.

Considering this, it is ironic that Leonidas appears to make a significant blunder in his praise of the *Phaenomena*. Contrary to Leonidas' claim (3), Aratus expressly says he does *not* discuss the planets or "wandering stars" (ἀλήμονας), only the fixed constellations.[42] It is tempting to conclude that Leonidas read the *Phaenomena* "at best inattentively."[43] Despite this fact, he evidently was aware of the intricacies of the *Phaenomena* and the reputation it enjoyed in well-informed circles. Perhaps he wished to create the impression that he too belonged to them.[44]

We can see that Leonidas and Callimachus both aim to associate themselves with the poetics of a successful contemporary. They attempt this by imitating the praised poetic ideals in the expression of admiration itself. Admirer and admired end by becoming, so to speak, equal; the admired aesthetics informs the expression of admiration itself and becomes a self-advertisement of the poet who praises. Hence, these expressions underscore the praising poet's own authority to praise.

5.4. *The Mirror of Immortality*

A similar principle may also be observed where immortality is claimed for the works of a contemporary, as the following epigram by Callimachus illustrates:

> Εἶπέ τις, Ἡράκλειτε, τεὸν μόρον, ἐς δέ με δάκρυ
> ἤγαγεν· ἐμνήσθην δ', ὁσσάκις ἀμφότεροι
> ἥλιον ἐν λέσχῃ κατεδύσαμεν. ἀλλὰ σὺ μέν που,
> ξεῖν' Ἁλικαρνησεῦ, τετράπαλαι σποδιή·
> αἱ δὲ τεαὶ ζώουσιν ἀηδόνες, ᾗσιν ὁ πάντων
> ἁρπακτὴς Ἀίδης οὐκ ἐπὶ χεῖρα βαλεῖ. (*AP* 7.80)

> Someone told me of your fate, Heraclitus, and made me shed a tear. And I remembered how often the two of us sank the sun with our talk. But you, I suppose, Halicarnassian friend, are four times turned to dust. Yet your nightingales live, on which Hades who takes all, will not lay his hands.

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[42] Aratus *Phaen.* 454–461: οὐδ' ἔτι θαρσαλέος κείνων ἐγώ· ἄρκιος εἴην / ἀπλανέων τά τε κύκλα τά τ' αἰθέρι σήματ' ἐνισπεῖν. (I am not at all confident in dealing with them [i.e., the planets]. I hope I may be adequate in expounding the circles of the fixed stars and their guide-constellations in the sky; transl. Kidd).

[43] Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*). Kaibel (1894: 122) thinks Leonidas has not read it at all and took over the praise directly from Callimachus. Cameron (1995: 324) argues for some knowledge of the text on his part.

[44] Alternatively, Leonidas may have been subtler than he seems on this interpretation, and actually referred (jokingly?) to the two lines that Aratus does spend on describing *his unwillingness* to write about the planets.

The apostrophe of Callimachus' friend dramatizes the tension between the living memory and the reality of death. In Callimachus' perception, it is as if Heraclitus were still there to be addressed.[45] The epigram elaborates on this motif by telling how the two companions "put the sun down" with their conversation. But now the sun has set forever on one of them.

The topic of immortality is addressed in the reference to the undying "nightingales" of Heraclitus.[46] It has been asked whether these "nightingales" were mere (unwritten) songs or written poems.[47] Since Callimachus wrote his thoughts on (im) mortality down, it would seem that he thought that putting poetry in writing was a reliable way of protecting it against the hands of Hades (6).[48] By implication, it is likely that his friend's poetry was written down as well. The presupposed situation of the epigram may therefore be that, on hearing of his friend's death, Callimachus took out his copy of Heraclitus' poetry to prolong their conversation and concluded that Heraclitus had left behind immortal words that still spoke for him.

Indeed, even from the vantage point of today, Heraclitus lives on, if not mainly in his own "nightingales:" Callimachus' epigram still testifies to his immortality and praises the enduring quality of his friend's poetry. In a way, the epigram thus also implicitly pronounces on Callimachus' own immortality: it has become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Another epigram by Callimachus makes a similar point about poetic immortality more emphatically:

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[45] The epigram captures, as Walsh (1990: 1–3) notes, a sample of "audible thought." Hunter (1992: 123) moreover notes that this poem marks a stage in the development of epigram from inscriptional to pure literary form: "Now there is no tombstone and no corpse, merely memory."

[46] It is unclear whether this was the title of a collection of poems, cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, 192), following Stadtmüller, or perhaps rather a metaphorical reference to Heraclitus' poetry in general (cf. *AP* 9.184 on Alcman; Hesychius too glosses ἀηδόνα· ᾠιδήν), but this does not influence the point. Diog. Laert. (9.17) identifies our Heraclitus as ἐλεγείας ποιητὴς Ἁλικαρνασσεύς εἰς ὅν Καλλίμαχος πεποίηκεν οὕτως ... (A Halicarnassian elegist on whom Callimachus composed the following lines ...), cf. Strabo (14.656).

[47] Russell (1981: 35) and Gutzwiller (1998: 206–207) both argue that the epigram illustrates that Callimachus believed the only survival beyond physical death lies in the written-down word. However Hunter (2007): "There is no way of ascertaining that Heraclitus' 'nightingales' should be understood as *written-down poems*. They may have been mere 'songs, remembered by his friend Callimachus.'" However, one epigram of Heraclitus (*AP* 7.465) survives, and the qualification Diog. Laert. (ἐλεγείας ποιητὴς) also points to writing.

[48] Cf. the topic of the epigrams discussed in Ch. 1.5.2.

Ἦλθε Θεαίτητος καθαρὴν ὁδόν· εἰ δ’ ἐπὶ κισσὸν
τὸν τεὸν οὐχ αὕτη, Βάκχε, κέλευθος ἄγει,
ἄλλων μὲν κήρυκες ἐπὶ βραχὺν οὔνομα καιρὸν
φθέγξονται, κείνου δ’ Ἑλλὰς ἀεὶ σοφίην. (*AP* 9.565)

Theaetetus went along the pure road. And if that path does not lead to your ivy, Bacchus, well, the heralds will but for a brief moment proclaim the names of others, but his skill Hellas will proclaim forever.

A certain Theaetetus, who apparently competed in a Dionysiac festival, did not win popular acclaim for his poetry.[49] Callimachus turns this fact into a positive qualification. Other poets may enjoy their "fifteen minutes of fame" through the proclamations of heralds; Theaetetus will be esteemed forever by the whole of Hellas. This is a prophecy of immortality gained through poetry and proclaimed in poetry, namely the poetry of Callimachus. He poses as a discerning connoisseur of poets who proceed along the "pure road." This expression strongly recalls the advice of Apollo to the young Callimachus in the prologue to the *Aetia*:[50]

πρὸς δέ σε] καὶ τόδ’ ἄνωγα, τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἅμαξαι
τὰ στείβειν, ἑτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ’ ὁμά
δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶν μηδ’ οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
ἀτρίπτο]υς, εἰ καὶ στεινοτέρην ἐλάσεις. (fr. 1.25–28 Pf.)

"And I'm telling you another thing: take the roads that are not open to hackneys, and do not drive your [chariot] in the ruts of others, and not over the broad way, but on [untrodden] paths, even if that means driving along a narrower lane."

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49 Theaetetus was not necessarily a dramatic poet, since dithyrambs and other kinds of poetry were also performed at Dionysiac festivals, cf. Cameron (1995: 59, n. 126 citing Fraser 1972: I, 619, 231). Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*) assume, pointing to the tense of the opening verb, that Theaetetus has switched from performance poetry to another less public kind. In fact, the *AP* contains six epigrams ascribed to a certain Theaetetus (cf. Gow and Page 1965: II, 520 ff.). It is not entirely certain that this is the same man.

50 One may further think of *AP* 12.43: οὐδὲ κελεύθῳ/χαίρω, τίς πολλοὺς ὧδε καὶ ὧδε φέρει. (The path that brings many hither and thither does not please me). The expressions have usually been interpreted as pointing back to Pindar (*O.* 6.23; *I.* 5.23: καθαρὴ κέλευθος); (*Paean* 7b 11: τριπ]τόν καθ' ἁμαξιτόν). Asper (1997: 29, n. 34), however, notes that the interpretation of the phrase in Pindar is very problematic, cf. Ch. 2.5.1. He interprets the metaphor in *AP* 9.565 as coming from the field of religious initiation (1997: 53–56): Theaetetus' poetry stands to vulgar poetry as the mystic initiate of Bacchus (who will be immortal in the next world) to the uninitiated. Callimachus and Theaetetus are represented as initiates in the same mystic ritual. Cf. also Fantuzzi (2005: 69–88).

As the previous chapter argued, such claims of exclusivity may be read as aimed at gaining distinction in the Bourdieuian sense of the word. In praising Theaetetus, then, Callimachus produces, as Alan Cameron puts it, "a mini encomium of another poet that turns out to be a statement of [his] own views on poetry."[51] At the same time, he arrogates the judgment of taste that decides who will be immortal and who will not by declaring that all Hellas will forever praise his work. This praise will therefore last eternally, like the positive judgment on Theaetetus' (i.e., by implication, *Callimachean*) poetics. Together, they determine the evaluation of Greek poetry: the fates of Theaetetus and Callimachus are firmly bound together by this epigram. Prophesying future fame for another poet on these conditions is equivalent to auguring future acclaim for oneself. This may moreover be coupled to the observation (cf. 5.2) that the Hellenistic poets of Callimachus' generation themselves held in particularly high esteem poetry that was already at least three hundred years old. If they perceived this to reflect their own appreciation by readers, then it may have suggested that true, unbiased appreciation was to be sought in the future perhaps even more than in the present.

A different interpretation of the epigram would emerge from an—admittedly speculative—reading of it in combination with two further epigrams by Callimachus that also address participation in Dionysiac competitions:

Μικρή τις, Διόνυσε, καλὰ πρήσσοντι ποιητῇ
    ῥῆσις· ὁ μὲν "Νικῶ" φησὶ τὸ μακρότατον·
ᾧ δὲ σὺ μὴ πνεύσῃς ἐνδέξιος, ἤν τις ἔρηται
    "Πῶς ἔβαλες;" φησί· "Σκληρὰ τὰ γιγνόμενα."
τῷ μερμηρίξαντι τὰ μὴ ἔνδικα τοῦτο γένοιτο
    τοὖπος· ἐμοὶ δ', ὦναξ, ἡ βραχυσυλλαβίη. (*AP* 9.566)

The speech of a successful poet is brief, Dionysus, "Won," he says at most. But when someone asks a poet whom you do not favor with inspiration, "What luck?" he answers, "Things are going badly." May that happen to him who has pondered unfairness; but may my word, O lord, be ever short-syllabled.

[51] Cameron (1995: 60). He moreover argues that σοφίη is another reference to Callimachean poetics (cf. fr. 1 Pf. 17–18: αὖθι δε τέχνῃ/κρίνετε μὴ σχοίνωι Περσίδι τὴν σοφίην: judge by art, not with the Persian yardstick), and of Pindaric descent. This seems to be taking the allusion a bit to far, since σοφίη is a common term in archaic poetry since Solon in connection with poetry and remains so in Hellenistic poetry.

Εὐδαίμων ὅτι τἆλλα μανεὶς ὡρχαῖος Ὀρέστας,
    Λεύκαρε, τὰν ἁμὰν οὐκ ἐμάνη μανίαν
οὐδ' ἔλαβ' ἐξέτασιν τῶ Φωκέος ἅτις ἐλέγχει
    τὸν φίλον· ἀλλ' αἰ χ' ἓν δρᾶμ' ἐδίδαξε μόνον,
ἦ τάχα κα τὸν ἑταῖρον ἀπώλεσε· τοῦτο ποήσας
    κἠγὼ τοὺς πολλοὺς οὐκέτ' ἔχω Πυλάδας.[52] (*AP* 11.362)

Orestes of old was lucky that, although he was mad in all other respects, Leucarus, at least that madness of mine did not seize him and he did not apply the ultimate test of friendship to the Phocian [i.e., Pylades]. No, had he but staged one drama, truly, he would have soon lost his friend. By doing this I too have lost all my Pyladeses.

The first epigram presupposes a speaker who participates in a Dionysiac competition[53] and prays for victory. Most commentators assume that the speaking *persona* is "Callimachus the poet." However, whereas the *Suda* ascribes to Callimachus satyr drama, tragedy and comedy, none of this alleged dramatic output survives. Fantuzzi (2005: 85) therefore argues (like Gow and Page *ad loc.*) that what we have here is yet another variant of Callimachus' poetic credo that short is sweet; and that Callimachus somehow pulls drama (which by implication in the hands of others is wordy, bombastic and popular) into the domain of his own poetics by this assertion.

The next epigram, *AP* 11.362 seems to describe the problems clinging to such poetic, dramatic, competition when it takes place between friends: it can easily turn to rivalry and hostility. Returning to the connection with *AP* 9.565, it is remarkable that Callimachus appears to wish for victory in dramatic competitions in *AP* 9.566 but consoles Theaetetus for losing by implying that the verdicts of juries in such competitions are ephemeral and cannot compete with the eternal judgment of Hellenic

[52] I follow the text of Gow and Page, which differs at some points from that of Beckby: ἁμὰν (2, Schneider) instead of μὰν (P) or λίαν (Beckby); αἰ χ' ἓν (4) instead of αἰ χῆν (Davies); τοὺς πολλοὺς (6) instead of τὼς πολλὼς (Wilamowitz). For the interpretation of the epigram, cf. Davies (1925: 176).

[53] Most commentators assume that the speaking *persona* is "Callimachus the poet." The *Suda* ascribes to Callimachus satyr drama, tragedy and comedy. None of this alleged dramatic output however survives. Fantuzzi (2005: 85) therefore argues (like Gow and Page *ad loc.*) that what we have here is yet another variant of Callimachus' poetic credo that short is sweet. He reads the epigram moreover in combination with *AP* 9.565 and 11.362 as condemning drama as an obsolete and boring, i.e. "popular" literary form. The choice for Orestes, in 11.362 according to Fantuzzi, would allude to the extreme unoriginality of contemporary drama, it is a mere rehearsal of classical themes like that of Orestes.

taste (*AP* 9.565).[54] Supposing that all three could be read as a series, perhaps the third epigram (*AP* 11.362) addresses the problem caused by the contradictory assertions of the other two. It could be argued that Callimachus thus stages what may happen in a poetic competition between friends: when his friend Theaetetus loses, he commiserates and deprecates the importance of such victories (*AP* 9.565). When Callimachus himself (impersonating the speaker) wins in a similar contest, he is happy (*AP* 9.566); suddenly victory is important, whereas losing is a fate that is wished upon "someone who has pondered unfairness." The hypocrisy resulting from this crass opposition might well cause one to lose one's friends (*AP* 11.362). However, as stated, a combined reading of the three poems must remain mere conjecture.

5.5. *Inviting Comparison*

Theocritus' *Id.* 7 arguably contains a parody on the implicit "claims of allegiance" to a poetic ideal such as we saw at work in the epigrams of Callimachus and Leonidas praising Aratus. In this poem, the young and inexperienced singer Simichidas tries to persuade the goatherd poet Lycidas,[55] whom he clearly expects to be the lesser singer, to join him in a singing competition with the following quasi-modest words:

(...) Λυκίδα φίλε, φαντί τυ πάντες
ἦμεν συρικτὰν μέγ' ὑπείροχον ἔν τε νομεῦσιν
ἔν τ' ἀματήρεσσι. τὸ δὴ μάλα θυμὸν ἰαίνει
ἁμέτερον· καίτοι κατ' ἐμὸν νόον ἰσοφαρίζειν
ἔλπομαι. (...) (7.27–31)

Lycidas, all men say that among the herdsmen and the reapers you are by far the best of pipers, and much it warms my heart to hear. And yet, in my thought, I fancy myself your equal.[56]

[54] The address to Dionysus seems to fortify the link between the two epigrams. *AP* 9.565 and 9.566 are consecutive in the *Anthologia Palatina*; this may, but of course need not, imply that they were consecutive in a Callimachean poetry book. Gutzwiller (1998: 304) argues that the two poems may originally have formed part of a (Meleagrean, i.e., first cent. BCE) section on poetic victory in book 6, but later have been repositioned by the Byzantine scholar Cephalas.

[55] On the identification of Simichidas and Lycidas, see Ch. 7.4.

[56] Especially the qualification of Lycidas as *syrinx* player (who punctuates his rural song with piping, pointedly contrasted with ἀοιδόν, 38) gives away Simichidas' real opinion of Lycidas, cf. Hunter (1999: 160), who notes that Simichidas considers Lycidas "a rural nobody."

Some lines later, he continues:

> καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ Μοισᾶν καπυρὸν στόμα, κἠμὲ λέγοντι
> πάντες ἀοιδὸν ἄριστον· ἐγὼ δέ τις οὐ ταχυπειθής
> οὐ Δᾶν· οὐ γάρ πω κατ' ἐμὸν νόον οὔτε τὸν ἐσθλόν
> Σικελίδαν νίκημι τὸν ἐκ Σάμω οὔτε Φιλίταν
> ἀείδων, βάτραχος δὲ ποτ' ἀκρίδας ὥς τις ἐρίσδω. (7.37–41)

> For I too am a clear voice of the Muses and all call me the best of singers. But I am slow to credit them, by Jove. For in my own esteem I am as yet no match in song either for the great Sicelidas from Samos or for Philitas but vie with them like a frog against grasshoppers. (transl. Gow adapted)

Apart from the claim that "all praise him as the best poet" (37–38), paradoxically, it is the expression οὐ ... πω ... ἐρίσδω ("I am as *yet* no match") that best reveals Simichidas' high opinion of himself.[57] For he hereby invites comparison with two of the most famous singers of an earlier generation of Hellenistic poetry: the epigrammatist Asclepiades of Samos (here called Sicelidas)[58] and Philitas, the former tutor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, a poet greatly admired in elitist poetic circles.[59] Later on, Simichidas will even brag that the fame of his poetry may well have reached "the throne of Zeus" (93), which is probably a reference to Ptolemy Philadelphus himself.[60]

It is inherently unlikely that a poet in the highest circles of court and the poetic elite would give any importance to a poetic competition with someone he appears to consider a "rural nobody" like Lycidas. Clearly, Simichidas' boasts are intended to awe this "simple" goatherd; they should not be taken at face value. Moreover, the fact that Simichidas speaks of his own poetic ability (even in a depreciatory sense) in the same breath as that of Philitas and Asclepiades betrays his belief that he will be rightly called their equal sooner rather than later. His simulated modesty

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57 Dover (1971: 147), Segal (1974: 128–136). On Simichidas' feigned modesty, cf. also Effe, (1988: 97–91), Hunter (1999: 144–199, *passim*), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 134–135).

58 For the identification, cf. Gow and Page (1965: II, 114–118, on Hedylus Ath. 11.473a); Fraser (1972: I, 557–561). *Schol. in Theoc.* consider it a patronymic.

59 Philitas was particularly famous for his elegies, in particular *Bittis* (cf. Call. fr. 1 Pf., Hermesianax, fr. 7 Powell, Posidippus 63 AB).

60 Cf. Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*), cf. Hunter (1999: 179). Ptolemy is also likened to Zeus in *Id.* 17.131–134. Another sign of Simichidas' pretension is his bragging about the wealth and talent of his alleged friends. At 31–34 he emphasizes the riches of his hosts, who have been introduced elaborately earlier on (4–6). Lines 99–102 contain exuberant praise of his friend Aristis, a lyre-player.

is a deliberate way of associating himself with their successful poetics. It works on the principle that claims of allegiance implicitly suggest similarity to the praised poet, as demonstrated above.

Lycidas' reply that Simichidas is "a sapling all fashioned for truth by Zeus" (πᾶν ἐπ' ἀλαθείᾳ πεπλασμένον ἐκ Διὸς ἔρνος, 44) gains ironic weight in this light.[61] It shows that Simichidas, despite (or perhaps because of) his feigned humility, unwittingly reveals his real motives and opinion of himself to Lycidas. In his naivety, he raises the stakes for comparison much too high, somewhat like a just-published novelist saying that the Nobel Prize will probably not come his way *this year yet*. Moreover, interesting in the light of the controversy surrounding Antimachus' *Lyde*, is the fact that Simichidas names both Asclepiades and Philitas as possible models for the kind of poetry he is composing. However, as we saw, it would appear that whereas Asclepiades was an admirer of the *Lyde*, and perhaps even attacked Callimachus' Acontius and Cydippe (*AP* 9.63), Philitas is named as a model by Callimachus in his *Aetia*-prologue as an example of elegant and refined poetry in the right vein. Is Simichidas, in his haste to declare his allegiance to fashionable poetics perhaps setting his foot wrong? If so, Lycidas' declaration that he dislikes the imitators of Homer (7.45–48, which, as we saw in Chapter 2, seems very close to Callimachus' poetic credo as expressed in the *Aetia-prologue*)[62] may even be meant to ironically set Simichidas right: Lycidas may be a shepherd, but he knows his Hellenistic, Callimachean esthetics better than Simichidas. There are multiple ironies at play under the mysterious surface of the words of this passage, then, and it would seem that in the end the better informed poet is not the names-dropping Simichidas.

The true subtlety of *Idyll* 7, however, lies in the fact that with hindsight the poem as a whole could be read as a tribute to Lycidas, "the simple goatherd," and his extraordinarily refined poetry. The poem thus creates an ironic distance between what is explicitly said by Simichidas in praise of Philitas and Asclepiades and the qualities of the mysterious goatherd poet Lycidas that are implicitly communicated by the *Idyll* as

[61] Gow (1952: II, 143) detects no irony here, nor does Dover (1971: 154), however Hunter (1999: 163): "Lycidas ironically takes him at his word." For a meta-poetic interpretation, see e.g. Goldhill (1991: 232–233) and Ch. 7.4.

[62] As Lohse (1966: 413–425) saw, the references to cackling cocks and frogs vying with locusts seem to echo, or bucolically vary, the animal comparison of the ass and the cicada in Callimachus' *Aetia-prologue*.

a whole.[63] With this fine piece of irony, Theocritus demonstrates that he knows how the workings of praise, specifically claiming allegiance to an admired poetics and comparison to admired poets, operate. A Hellenistic poet who proclaimed what he admired, thereby revealed who he hoped to be, or, as in Simichidas' case, to become. Lycidas, the older poet, unconcerned about his looks, and smell, uninterested in important friends and connections, yet echoing in a natural and unpremeditated way the spirit of the age is a fitting symbol of Theocritus' bucolic ideal.

5.6. *Eliciting Praise*

In the context of a discussion praise and admiration, some brief remarks are also due on the compliments poets paid to the literary judgment of their patrons or other addressees. By implying that his literary taste is impeccable, a poet implicitly obliges the intended recipient to like his poem. A similar principle underlies the flattering opposition Callimachus creates in his *Aetia*-prologue between the ideal (or implied) readers of his text and his ignorant detractors, the *Telchines*.[64] Phrases like the following illustrate this intention:

(...) ἐνὶ τοῖς γὰρ ἀείδομεν οἳ λιγὺν ἦχον
τέττιγος, θ]όρυβον δ' οὐκ ἐφίλησαν ὄνων. (fr. 1.29–30 Pf.)

For we sing in the ranks of those who love the delicate sound of the cicada, and not the braying of asses.

In this poem, the image of a negative reception of poetry (as exemplified by the Telchines' complaints) serves as a foil to its desired reception by the addressee (Cf. Chapter 4.5). This principle also informs the structure of Theocritus' 16th *Idyll* for Hiero II of Syracuse (cf. Chapter 2.3). By ridiculing the point of view of miserly and stingy patrons, Theocritus implies that he expects Hiero to be generous and aristocratic in his approach to poets. Ptolemy Philadelphus, on the other hand, whose generous patronage of the arts apparently inspires more confidence, is not flattered by Theocritus with such indirect means but praised explicitly as a connoisseur and generous patron:[65]

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[63] Although this is of course hard to prove, Lycidas' song is generally considered aesthetically much superior to that of Simichidas.

[64] Cf. Schmitz (1999: 151–178), see also Ch. 4.5.1.

[65] Ptolemy is called φιλόμουσος by Thyonichus in Theoc. *Id*. 14.61.

οὐδὲ Διωνύσου τις ἀνὴρ ἱεροὺς κατ' ἀγῶνας
ἵκετ' ἐπιστάμενος λιγυρὰν ἀναμέλψαι ἀοιδάν,
ᾧ οὐ δωτίναν ἀντάξιον ὤπασε τέχνας.
Μουσάων δ' ὑποφῆται ἀείδοντι Πτολεμαῖον
ἀντ' εὐεργεσίης. (17.112–115)

And never comes there for the sacred contest of Dionysus one skilled to raise his clear-voiced song but he receives the gift his art deserves, and those mouthpieces of the Muses sing of Ptolemy for his benefactions. (transl. Gow)

The passage enacts the age-old ideal of patronage: the principle of *do ut des* through which poetry may thrive and procure κλέος for its patrons. It was of course extremely appropriate to flatter this particular king in such a way, since his support of the Alexandrian Museum showed that he wished to present himself as a lover of literature.[66] In the encomium, Theocritus characterizes himself as one of the many "prophets of the Muses" who sing Ptolemy's praises: all singers are envisaged as peacefully hymning the king in unison (17.115); an interesting contrast with the tactic employed in Callimachus' *Aetia* prologue. This may be explained by the observation that in the openly panegyric, indeed almost hymnic context of the 17th *Idyll*, it would of course not do to suggest that Theocritus was the *only* poet prepared to sing the King's praises. Ptolemy is like a god in many ways, but especially in the way in which his euergetism inspires men to sing his praises. As Chapter 7 will illustrate however, Theocritus does subtly emphasize the fact that he is a poet is in possession of exclusive qualities which Ptolemy will need. He is not merely one of the many.

A similar hymnic consensus of praising voices is also predicted in the prophetic ending of *Id.* 16, where the peaceful future of a bountiful Sicily under the benign reign of Hiero is envisaged:

εἷς μὲν ἐγώ, πολλοὺς δὲ Διὸς φιλέοντι καὶ ἄλλους
θυγατέρες, τοῖς πᾶσι μέλοι Σικελὴν Ἀρέθοισαν
ὑμνεῖν σὺν λαοῖσι καὶ αἰχμητὴν Ἱέρωνα. (16.101–103)

I am but one, and the daughters of Zeus love many another beside; and may they all be fain to sing of Sicilian Arethusa with her warriors and the spearman Hiero. (transl. Gow)

The question whether this is a natural wish in a poet who seems to be desperately seeking a patron in the rest of *Idyll* 16 is beside the

[66] Weber reads the expression Μουσάων δ' ὑποφῆται as an indirect reference to the *Museum* (1993: 322). However, on this expression, see Ch. 8.

point. What is important is the assuaging of the hoped-for patron's mood towards this single proposing poet. A little flattery, implying that everyone must want to sing his praises, might accomplish this, or so Theocritus appears to think.[67]

The compliments Theocritus pays to his ξένος (guest-friend) the Milesian doctor Nicias (*Id.* 11, 13, 28) may also be addressed in this context. Theocritus is very flattering in his appreciation of Nicias' poetic sensibilities; he praises him extravagantly as exceedingly loved by the nine Muses (ταῖς ἐννέα δὴ πεφιλημένον ἔξοχα Μοίσαις) and a holy shoot of the sweet-voiced Graces (Χαρίτων ἱμεροφώνων ἵερον φύτον). Some epigrams that Nicias composed survive in the *Palatine Anthology*, which shows that Meleager deemed them worthy of his *Garland*.[68] Nicias must therefore have been a poet of some repute, even if the epigrams are not of extraordinary quality. But this is beside the point, because in reality, Theocritus is not primarily concerned with asserting that Nicias was an extraordinary poet. In *Idyll* 11, the praise for Nicias' poetic qualities is mainly part of the humorous explanation of why he will be an expert in judging the wisdom of the Cyclops, who found the perfect remedy for lovesickness in poetry: he is both a doctor and a poet.[69] Perhaps *Idyll* 11's presupposed situation is that Nicias is unhappily in love and writing love-poetry, like the Cyclops Polyphemus, who was not known foremost for his inspired poetry. If so, the compliment amounts to the following: "Nicias, you will be able to appreciate this poem like no other, for, just like Polyphemus, you are a poet and in love." The scholiast relates that Nicias replied to this humorous taunt:

> ἦν ἄρ' ἀληθὲς τοῦτο, Θεόκριτε· οἱ γὰρ Ἔρωτες
> ποιητὰς πολλοὺς ἐδίδαξαν τοὺς πρὶν ἀμούσους. (fr. 566 *SH*)
>
> That was very true, Theocritus. For the Erotes teach many, who were not musical before, to be poets.

[67] Cf. Goldhill (1991: 279–280).

[68] *AP* 6.122; *AP* 6.127; *AP* 6.270; *AP* 7.200; *AP* 9.315; *AP* 9.564; *APl.* 188; *APl.* 189, most of these are dedications, some with a hint of bucolicism (*AP* 7.200; *AP* 9.564; *APl.* 189). As Gow and Page (1965: II, 429) remark: "they are of reasonable competence rather than of distinction (…) unless Nicias' surviving works are unfair to him, we must allow for the obligations of friendship and courtesy [in Theocritus' praise of him]."

[69] It may well be that Callimachus refers and answers to this poem in his epigram *AP* 12.150. Cf. Klooster (2009: 61–64), where he claims he understands the Cyclops even better, since he too is a poet and knows how poetry may cure love: by the poverty that accompanies it.

This ties in with the proposed explanation: Nicias seems to admit he has written poetry only because he was unhappily in love.[70] Clearly, Theocritus' compliments of Nicias have a tongue in cheek or humorous edge and form an ironic parody of the conventional praise usually lavished upon a recipient of poetry. As has been demonstrated, he is not above paying such compliments on his own patrons, Hiero II and Ptolemy Philadelphus and, in the context of his more familiar relationship with Nicias, the principles of the *captatio benevolentiae* were perhaps gently parodied.

5.7. *Conclusion*

The drives underlying the wish to praise contemporaries are not so different from those influencing criticism and blame, so often regarded as typical for the atmosphere among the bickering scribblers in the Birdcage of the Muses. In both cases, the underlying wish appears to be rooted in a desire for distinction, the creation of a position in the field of cultural production, and the discussion about how the tradition should be incorporated in contemporary poetic practice. As we have seen, these discussions may be related to the Asmannian theories of Cultural Memory, and in particular, in the case of Disocorides, to the so-called "floating gap" that divides living memory from the distant past, which is perceived as directly formative of the present.

A recurrent feature of praise is the wish to be aligned with the distinctive and refined poetics of a successful contemporary (as in the case of Aratus, praised by Callimachus and Leonidas). This is done by subtly incorporating the admired parameters of the praised poetics in the poetry of praise itself. A double connection between the poetics of the two poets at the giving and the receiving ends of the praise is thus forged, explicitly (by the mere expression of praise) and implicitly (by incorporating the admired principles in the expression of praise). By making an object of admiration the subject of poetry, the poet adopts, so to say, the admired poetics of the other poet and moreover implicitly demonstrates his authoritative judgment.

At times, praising a less successful poet may be worthwhile as well, because it displays an exclusivity of judgment and a taste that will only be

[70] Alternatively, he might be turning the gibe on Theocritus, perhaps. Due to the lack of context, the full implications of the epigram remain ambiguous.

shared in times to come (as in Callimachus' epigram on Theaetetus). By proclaiming the immortality of the praised in his poetry, the poet implies that his own poetry will also be immortal, as it will accompany and testify to the immortality of the other.

Striving to attain a certain similarity to the object of praise is clearly the principal factor underlying the praise of contemporary poets, then. In a slightly different form, this principle is also evidenced by an author's pleas for benevolent judgment on the part of the reader (cf. Theocritus *Id.* 16, 17). Through praise of the addressee's poetic sensibilities, the poet hopes to secure a generous reception of the poem. Theocritus was clearly aware that this principle was of fundamental importance to giving praise, claiming allegiance to the poetics of successful contemporaries, and flattering patrons. He parodies these practices in his humorous description of Simichidas, the naive poet comparing himself with the great names of the age (7). Moreover, his extravagant compliments of Nicias' poetic qualities, deliberately placed in a comic context, also point to ironic awareness of the conventions of the *captatio benevolentiae*, which he himself practices seriously in *Idylls* 16 and 17.

All in all, the subject of praise of contemporaries and the awareness of its principles emerge as integral and vital parts of the Hellenistic discourse on poetics in the birdcage of the Muses. Poets distinguished themselves not only with the divisive weapon of blame but also by forming (occasionally eternal) alliances.

CHAPTER SIX

PERSONA, ALIAS AND ALTER EGO IN *SPHRAGIS*-POETRY

6.1. Sphragides

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Hellenistic preoccupation with literary tradition occasioned a vogue of literary epitaphs for dead poets.[1] Most of these can be read as (playful) literary evaluations: in the compass of a few lines, they strive to convey the most essential characteristics of the works and personality of these poets, items that were regarded as reflections of each other. A remarkable echo of this practice is found in the *sphragis* poetry that Hellenistic poets started to write about themselves; these too often took the form of literary epitaphs.[2] In these poems, we see how their outlook on the literary past steered their glance forward to their own hoped-for fame and thus influenced the way they tried to enter the literary tradition.[3]

The moment has now come to discuss these self-representations, expressions of poetic voice and *persona*.[4] The first part of this chapter dis-

[1] Cf. e.g. *AP* 7.5 (Alc. of Messene on Homer); *AP* 7.11 (Asclep. on Erinna); *AP* 7.28 (Anon. on Anacreon); 7.410 (Diosc. on Tellen); *AP* 7.709 (Alex. Aet. on Alcman).

[2] Leonidas *AP* 7.715; Nossis *AP* 7.718; Callimachus *AP* 7.415.

[3] Besides the epitaph, frequent themes in epigrammatic self-portraits are the symposium, dedications to the gods (Leonidas *AP* 6.300, Nossis *AP* 6.265) or simply priamel-like statements of preference (Asclepiades *AP* 5.169; Nossis *AP* 5.170; Callimachus *AP* 12.43). On the symposiastic theme see in particular Reitzenstein (1893). For recent reviews of his ideas, see e.g. Cameron (1995: 71–103), Gutzwiller (1998: 115–122), Parsons (2002: 99–137), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 283–349), Guichard (2004: 54–55). All these accounts stress the tension between fictional literacy and fictional orality characterizing Hellenistic epigram. The preeminence of this theme suggests that belonging to the social stratum that frequented symposia was an important part of the projected identity of many third-century poets. Examples are: Callimachus *AP* 7.415, Asclepiades *AP* 12.50; Hedylus Ath. 11.473a/GP 5; Posidippus *AP* 5.134.

[4] By "persona," I mean the (to some extent possibly fictional) personality of the author as projected in his first-person utterances. The recognition of the concept "persona" is relatively recent; in the 19th century, biographical readings of ancient Greek poetry that hardly distinguished between the historical poet and his or her constructed persona were common, cf. de Jong (2002: 387–399). This is similar to ancient biographical practice;cf. Leo (1901), Momigliano (1971), Lefkowitz (1981). Theoretical distinction

cusses, more or less *exempli gratia*, the notorious *sphragis*-elegy[5] or *Seal of Posidippus* (*SH* 705/AB 118). In this poem the poet emphatically engages with archaic poetic models for his self-representation; also, in its explicit self-portrayal, it serves as an excellent foil for the more indirect ways of self-representation discussed in the second half of this chapter. There are many more instances of *sphragis*-poetry to be found in Hellenistic poetry, but most have been so extensively discussed in recent literature as to make new discussion unprofitable; references may be found in the notes.

To begin with, let us have a brief look at the history of self portrayals of authors in Greek poetry. *Sphragis* passages are absent from the Homeric epics[6] but can be found as early as Hesiod (*Th.* 21–36), the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (165–172) and, most famously perhaps, Theognis:[7]

> Κύρνε, σοφιζομένωι μὲν ἐμοὶ σφρηγὶς ἐπικείσθω
> τοῖσδ' ἔπεσιν, λήσει δ' οὔποτε κλεπτόμενα,
> οὐδέ τις ἀλλάξει κάκιον τοὐσθλοῦ παρεόντος·
> ὧδε δὲ πᾶς τις ἐρεῖ· "Θεύγνιδός ἐστιν ἔπη
> τοῦ Μεγαρέως· πάντας δὲ κατ' ἀνθρώπους ὀνομαστός."
> (Theogn. 18–22)

> Cyrnus, let a seal be set by me, capable poet as I am, upon these words and they shall never be stolen unnoticed and no one shall put a worse verse where the better one is present. Thus will everyone speak: "these are the words of Theognis of Megara, and he is famous among all people."

This kind of *sphragis*, presumably meant to guarantee authorship, gains importance when poets are no longer naturally present at the occasion of performance (i.e., when a poem starts to circulate independently of its author). Although the separation of author and work first occurred

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between persona and *poeta* is not found in ancient literary criticism, cf. Halliwell (1987: 172) on Arist. *Po.* 1460a5–11, Clay (1998: 9–40).

[5] The term is taken from Theogn. 18–22. What kind of *sphragis* he envisaged is disputed, cf. e.g. Courtney (1990: 8–9), Pratt (1995: 171–184), Gerber (1997: 117–129). Kranz (1967: 27–79) names the following characteristics of *sphragis*: invocation of the gods of poetic inspiration, mention of the γένος (ethnicity and family) and τρόπος (character) of the poet, and (in hymns) the αὔταρ ἐγώ-formula indicating the next song the poet will embark upon.

[6] This leaves out the Muse-invocations or the representation of the blind bard Demodocus, who was seen in antiquity as a reflection of Homer; they do not belong to the same category as Hesiod's *sphragis*.

[7] On Hesiod's *sphragis* cf. West (1966: ad 22–34), Dornseiff (1966: 37–38; 76), West (1978: 24), Griffith (1983: 40). On *HH Apoll.*, cf. Càssola (1999: *ad loc.*) and West (1999: 364–382). On Theognis, see Courtney (1990: 8–9), Pratt (1995: 171–184), Gerber (1997: 117–129).

whenever a song was performed in the absence of its composer, the sense of disconnection inevitably became more evident as the oral-aural transmission of poetry was replaced by writing and reading, a development finding its culmination in the *era of the book*, as Rudolf Pfeiffer called the Hellenistic era.[8]

Apart from authorship, the physical separation of author and work entails the problem of identifying the speaker's voice. At live performances, external factors inherent to performance (e.g., number of speakers, gender, the presence of persons and objects referred to in the song) generally allow an audience to perceive more easily to what degree the speaker and the poetic "I" are identical. In written and read versions of poetical works, this is not always self-evident; a speaking voice may remain unidentified when removed from external identifiers provided by the original context of a performance.[9] Perhaps *sphragis*-like poetic signatures are so common in Hellenistic poetry because they help prevent this uncertainty by allowing the author to broadcast his authorship. The increased interest for the biography of the poet (cf. Chapter 1) may also have played a role in their growing popularity.

6.2. *The Seal or Testament of Posidippus*

In the opinion of Gow and Page the famous, intriguing "Seal of Posidippus" (*SH* 705/AB 118) does "not enhance [Posidippus'] reputation … nor tell us much about him" (1965: II, 482).[10] Although readers might be

[8] On the importance of literacy to Hellenistic poetry, cf. Bing (1988). Unsurprisingly, this is also the time when acrostics, which allowed authors to incorporate their name indelibly in their works, first appeared. On (signature) acrostics in Greek and Latin poetry, cf. Courtney (1990: 3–13). Examples of acrostics serving as *sphragis*: Chaeremon, end of fifth century BCE: ΧΑΙΡΗΜ- (fr. 14b Snell); Nicander of Colophon, second cent. BCE: Lobel (1928: 114–115) ΝΙΚΑΝΔΡΟΣ: (*Ther.* 345–353; *Alex.* 266–274.); the iambic proem to Eudoxus' (?) astronomical treatise, second cent. BCE: ΕΥΔΟΞΟΥ ΤΕΧΝΗ; the first 23 lines of the proem to the geographical work of a certain Dionysius, son of Calliphon, first cent. BCE: ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΛΛΙΦΩΝΤΟΣ.

[9] Cf. Bowie (1993: 1–37). Although see the reservations of Carey (1999:20) and Morrison (2007: 111): in oral presentations too, the identity of a speaker might remain unclear, especially in choral lyric.

[10] For a history of the finding, publication and ascription of the poem, see Lloyd-Jones (1963: 75–77) and the annotation *SH*. Posidippus' authorship had already been suggested by Trypanis (1952: 67–68) on the basis of an inscription at Delphi (dated 263 BCE), and another at Thermos fitting the details of the poem, cf. AB test. 2 and 3. Did this elegy open or close a collection of Posidippus' poems? Lloyd-Jones defends an opening position (1963: 96), Barigazzi a closing one (1968: 195). Gutzwiller keeps both

inclined to agree on the first point, the second calls for closer scrutiny. I will focus on the roles of model poets named in it and on the combination of character and evaluation, or ethics and esthetics, which informs the poem.

εἴ τι καλόν, Μοῦσαι πολιήτιδες, ἢ παρὰ Φοίβου
   χρυσολύρεω καθαροῖς οὔασιν ἐκλ[ύ]ετε
Παρνησοῦ νιφόεντος ἀνὰ πτύχ[α]ς ἢ παρ᾽ Ὀλύμπωι
   Βάκχωι τὰς τριετεῖς ἀρχόμεναι θυμέλα[ς,]
νῦν δὲ Ποσε[ι]δίππωι στυγερὸν συναείσατε γῆρας
   γραψάμεναι δέλτων ἐν χρυσέαις σελίσιν.
λιμπάνετε σκοπιὰς Ἑλικωνίδας, εἰς δὲ τὰ Θήβης
   τείχεα Πιπ[λ]ẹị̈ης βαίνετε, Κασταλίδες.
καὶ σὺ Ποσείδιππόν ποτ᾽ ἐφίλαο, Κύνθιε, Λητοῦς
   υἱ᾽ ẹκ̣ά̣ε[ργ]ẹ, βẹ́λ̣ο̣ς̣ (*vacat*)
[..].[......]..ρα̣ν̣[.]ν̣ω̣............
   τοῦ Παρίου φήμη τις νιφόεντ᾽ οἰκία.
τοίην ἐκχρήσαις τε καὶ ἐξ ἀδύτων καναχήσαι[ς]
   φωνὴν ἀθανάτην, ὦ ἄνα, καὶ κατ᾽ ἐμοῦ,
ὄφρα με τιμήσωσι Μακηδόνες, οἵ τ᾽ ἐπὶ ν̣[ήσων]
   οἵ τ᾽ Ἀσίης πάσης γείτονες ἠϊόνος.
Πελλαῖον γένος ἀμόν· ἔοιμι δὲ βίβλον ἑλίσσων
   †ἄμφω† λαοφόρωι κείμενος εἰν ἀγορῆι.
ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ μὲν Παρίηι ἀηδόνι λυγρὸν ἐφ[...]
   νῆμα κατὰ γληνέων δάκρυα κẹι̣ν̣ὰ̣ χ̣ẹ́ω̣[ν]
καὶ στενάχων, δι᾽ ἐμὸν δὲ φίλον στόμα
   α̣σ̣τ̣[...]..............
[..]...........
   μηδέ τις οὖν χεύαι δάκρυον· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ
γήραϊ μυστικὸν οἶμον ἐπὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν ἱκοίμην
   δήμωι καὶ λαῶι παντὶ ποθεινὸς ἐών,
ἀσκίπων ἐν ποσσὶ καὶ ὀρθοεπὴς ἀν᾽ ὅμιλον
   καὶ λείπων τέκνοις δῶμα καὶ ὄλβον ἐμόν. (*SH* 705/AB 118)

If, Muses of my city, you have with pure ears heard anything beautiful, either from Phoebus of the golden lyre, in the glens of snowy Parnassus, or near Olympus, as you start for Bacchus his triennial ceremonies, now help Posidippus to sing of his hateful old age, writing down the song on the

possibilities open (1998: 152). Candidates for such collections are the so-called Σωρός (in this case understood as a collection that only comprised Posidippus' poetry), and the "*epigrammata*" mentioned in the *scholia A ad Il.* 11.101, Lloyd-Jones (1963: 96–97), Gutzwiller (1998: 152). Lloyd-Jones moreover suggests that the poem constituted the opening to a collection of poetry concerning old age, for which he suggest the title Γῆρας, cf. AB 118, 5. In the absence of attestations for such a collection, this remains speculative. Gow and Page (1965: II, 484) list testimonies indicating that Posidippus also wrote longer elegiac poetry.

> golden columns of your tablets. Leave your Heliconian peaks, and come to the walls of Piplean Thebes, Muses of Castalia. You also loved Posidippus once, Cynthian god, of Leto the far-shooting son … a dart … … … an oracle to the snow-white house of the man from Paros. May you send forth and sound out from your holy shrine such an immortal voice, O Lord, even for me, so that the Macedonians may honor me, both the islanders and the neighbors of all the Asiatic shore. Pellaean is my family. May I find myself unrolling a book standing (all at once?) in the crowded market-place. For the Parian nightingale (grant?) … a mournful thread, with (empty?) tears streaming down the eyelids, and groaning, while through my own mouth … … … and let no one shed a tear. But for my part, may I travel in old age the mystic path to Rhadamanthys, longed for by my people and all the community, on my feet without a stick, sure of speech among the crowd, and leaving to my children my house and my wealth.[11]
>
> (transl. Austin, adapted)

In a variation on the typical manner of prayers, the poet asks the Muses, if they ever enjoyed hearing anything beautiful from Apollo, now to help him sing of his "hateful old age."[12] They are invited to inscribe this song on golden tablets, which presumably means it is supposed to become immortal.[13] Is the song referred to this poem? Or is this poem meant as proem to a work about old age? It is hard to decide, but old age, which here receives the stock epithet στυγερὸν, does figure prominently. At the moment of voicing his request the poet is located at ("Pi(m)pleian) Thebes." Possible references to unknown festivals aside, the geographical reference may evoke Orpheus (born near Pimpleia, according to some) as a model for Posidippus.[14] Posidippus' claims of initiation in the mystic rites of the blessed (cf. 25) furnish an additional link with Orpheus.[15]

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[11] Some notes on the text and translation: in 5, AB read συναείϱατε (help bear the burden). I prefer the perfectly understandable original (συναείσατε), cf. Theoc. *Id.* 10.24. In 18, I fail to understand the reason for the proposed ἄφνῳ; the original reads ἀμφω, which is however difficult as well. I prefer to print daggers. In 20, I doubt the reading κ̣ε̣ι̣ν̣ά̣ "empty." Regrettably, I was not able to see the original tablet.

[12] Cf. for the combination of the Muses and old Age, cf. Call. fr. 1.37–38 Pf.: Μοῦσαι γὰϱ ὅσους ἴδον ὄθματι παῖδας / μὴ λοξῷ, πολιοὺς οὐκ ἀπέθεντο φίλους. (For upon who the Muses in childhood looked with no unfriendly gaze, they won't neglect them when they are grey).

[13] The reference to writing once more recalls the *Aetia*-prologue.

[14] "Pi (m)pleian" may also be an epithet of the Muses rather than of Thebes; for the difficulty of deciding on the spelling, see Lloyd—Jones (1963 *ad loc.*). He sees no way to interpret the adjective. Bing (1988: 38) proposes that Pi(m)pleian Thebes may be understood as referring to a kind of literary reality; it is anywhere Posidippus wishes it to be, if he only describes it on his tablets. Alternatively, Egyptian Thebes might be meant.

[15] Pi(m)pleia is where Orpheus was borne by Calliope according to A.R. *Arg.* 1.25; it is near Pieria, the traditional haunt of the Muses, cf. Rossi (1996: 63).

Besides this indirect reference to Orpheus, the poet Archilochus plays a prominent role in the poem: Apollo is asked to grant Posidippus an oracle similar to the one he gave for the "man from Paros" (τοῦ Παρίου 12, cf. 19 Παρίηι ἀηδόνι).[16] The oracle referred to is presumably the well-known one to Archilochus' father, to the effect that his son would be "immortal and renowned in song among men."[17] Divine honors apart, we may wonder why Archilochus is singled out. Tradition about him is dominated by references to his (scurrilous) iambs and epodes; the Posidippus we know from the epigrams is entirely different both in choice of topic (the pleasures of love, the symposium, literary themes, art, panegyric themes related to the Ptolemies) and meter (the elegiac distich). From the point of view of genre, it may however be important to remember that Archilochus was considered the inventor of a wide spectrum of metrical forms, among which elegy also figured prominently.[18] Posidippus may therefore be posing as the mild elegiac inheritor of non-conformist Archilochus. Archilochus is thus set up as foil, a model in that he was a poet and famous, while his morals and reputation are less worthy of emulation.

Indeed, a contrast seems to have been intended between the tears that are shed for (or perhaps *because of the poetry of*?) the "Parian nightingale" Archilochus (19–20) and the life and death of Posidippus, which he apparently hopes will go unlamented (24). Lloyd-Jones suggests that this expected difference in lamentation must have been due to the

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[16] On the various oracles pertaining to Archilochus, see Gerber (1999, test. 3; 12–18), Clay (2004: 9–25). Lloyd-Jones thinks the oracle referred to is the third cent. BCE oracle of Mnesiepes, concerning the re-installing of the cult of Archilochus at Paros and the building of a sanctuary named the *Archilocheion*, cf. *SEG* 15 (1958), 517. However, there appear to be no ancient references to this oracle. The oracle of Mnesiepes may in fact have been of very local significance, even if the cult and monument that resulted from it where doubtless more widely known, and indeed presumably loom large in Posidippus' poem. Moreover, the wish for actual cultic honors is unparalleled in surviving Hellenistic poetry. However, for the possibility that the older contemporary of Posidippus, Philitas, was given such honors, see Hollis (1996: 56–62).

[17] "Ἀθάνατός σοι παῖς καὶ ἀοίδιμος, ὦ Τελεσίκλεις, ἔσται ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ..." (Your son, Telesicles, will be immortal and subject of song among men ...). Cf. Gerber (1999: test. 3; 18). The other famous oracle was pronounced to the killer of Archilochus: "You killed the servant of the Muses, depart from the temple," cf. test. 12–18. In the present context, the former oracle is more meaningful.

[18] We have a great many elegiac fragments on various topics under his name, cf. Gerber 1999; the epigram by Theocritus *AP* 7.664, while calling Archilochus a poet of iambi, implicitly also appears to allude to this belief, cf. Rossi (2001: 327–328). Moreover, invention of elegy, as we saw, was also attributed to Orpheus, *AP* 7.9, cf. Ch. 1.

fact that Archilochus died an early death in battle[19] and wrote "bitter" (iambic) poetry, whereas Posidippus wishes to live until old age, a pillar of society, (25) and write poetry of a more pleasant, edifying character.[20] Considering this, it may be attractive to read the emphatic assertions of poetic eminence and respectability which fill the poem and which to modern eyes read as shameless self-congratulation in the light of traditions about how Archilochus' poetry gave rise to his notoriety. On this topic, Critias states that no-one would have known that Archilochus was the impoverished son of a slave woman named Enipo, that he picked fights, slandered friend and foe, was an adulterer and, worst of all, threw away his shield to flee in battle, *had he himself not told us so*. He concludes: οὐκ ἀγαθὸς ἄρα ἦν ὁ Ἀρχίλοχος μάρτυς ἑαυτῶι, τοιοῦτον κλέος ἀπολιπὼν καὶ τοιαύτην ἑαυτῶι φήμην. (So, Archilochus was not a good witness to his own character, leaving behind such fame and such a reputation for himself, cf. *SH* 705/AB 118 esp. line 26–28).[21] If a reference to this tradition is indeed present in Posidippus' *sphragis*, it becomes easier to understand the extremely positive image Posidippus sketches of himself. This might simply reflect the degree to which Hellenistic poets believed that biography was influenced by a poet's own words.

Apart from an attempt to broadcast his eminently respectable character, recompense for his poetic abilities is high on Posidippus' agenda: he wishes to be honored by all Macedonians and all inhabitants of the Asian shore (ὄφρα με τιμήσωσι … 15–16). The geographic precision of this wish may partly be explained by the fact that Posidippus himself is of Macedonian stock, but it is also relevant that the ruling Hellenistic dynasties, in particular the Ptolemaic house, were. The Ptolemies indeed dominated the eastern Mediterranean, that is to say, "the Asian shore." Posidippus is implying that he confidently regards the social and cultural elite of the Greek-speaking world ruled by the Ptolemies as his primary audience.[22] This recognition on a human scale (instigated by the wished-for Delphic oracle?) should find its material expression in an honorary statue (cf. lines 17–18, to the effect that Posidippus may "find himself standing in the agora, apparently of Pella, handling a scroll," to celebrate his poetic

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[19] On the (too) early death of Archilochus, and Apollo's anger at the man who killed him, cf. Gerber (1999: test. 12–18).

[20] Rossi (1996: 64) argues that ὀρθοεπής refers to the moral rightness of Posidippus' poetry.

[21] Ael. *V. H.* 10.13(= Crit. *test.* 88 B 44 DK).

[22] On Posidippus' connections with the Ptolemaic court, see Kosmetatou (2004: 225–246), Stephens (2005: 229–248), Fantuzzi (2005: 249–268), Thompson (2005: 269–286).

achievements).[23] This is a unique sort of wish among poets in general; both in its striking immodesty and also because the more usual wish is for *poetic* immortality.[24] Not for Posidippus the thought that poetry outlives monuments: he'd rather have his monument as well.

It is hard to escape the notion that all these wishes for recognition are not so much expressed for the benefit of *future* readers as aimed at impressing contemporaries, spurring them on to fitting tributes. In this respect, Posidippus also strikingly differs from for instance Callimachus, who claims to despise broad popular acclaim from contemporaries and instead focuses on the elite, or on the appreciation of later generations, once his poetry had stood the test of time. The persona of the poor poet, which prominently figures in Callimachus' poetry, is here accordingly replaced by the image of the wealthy, appreciated society figure (cf. lines 25–28). Perhaps the *scholia florentina* were not so wide off the mark after all in supposing a certain antagonism between Callimachus and Posidippus; their self-representation as poets is at least strikingly different (cf. Chapter 4).[25] Besides a statue, Posidippus also expects immortality because of his mystic initiation (25),[26] which should ensure life among the blessed in the realm of Rhadamanthys.[27] Again, poetry disappears completely from sight.

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[23] See Lloyd-Jones (1963: *ad loc.*) and Gutzwiller (1998: 152). Cf. the bronze statue of Philitas (Pos. AB 63), and the series of epigrams on the statues of the dead poets by Theocritus, discussed in Ch. 1. The statue of a seated man holding a scroll in the Vatican collection (inv. no. 735) with the inscription ΠΟΣΕΙΔΙΠΠΟΣ is believed by Dickie (1994: 373–383) to portray the epigrammatist; others think it depicts the homonymous contemporary comic poet.

[24] Cf. the references to monuments versus poetry as cited in the context of *Aetia* fr. 63, Chapter 1.

[25] Contrast also for instance the epigrams of Leonidas of Tarentum, who consistently represents himself as poor (e.g. *AP* 7.715, 6.300, 6.302), see Gutzwiller (1998: 90–113).

[26] Cf. AB test. 1, a golden lamella (fourth cent. BCE from Pella) inscribed: Φερσεφόνηι | Ποσείδιππος μύστης | εὐσεβής (To Persephone, from the pious initiate Posidippus). Considering its date, this may refer to the *grandfather* of the present Posidippus, cf. Dickie (1995: 81–86), (1996: 59–65). Even so, hereditary initiation in the family of Posidippus is possible. For the hereditary nature of proper names, cf. Call. *AP* 7.525. The initiation is clearly of a religious kind; to read into the expression a meta-poetical metaphor (Posidippus as initiate of the Muses *vel sim.*, cf. Lloyd—Jones) is less attractive, cf. Rossi (1996: 65).

[27] Perhaps allusion to Archilochus is once more intended: οὔτις αἰδοῖος μετ' ἀστῶν οὐδὲ περίφημος θανὼν / γίνεται· χάριν δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ζοοῦ διώκομεν / ⟨οἱ⟩ ζοοί, κάκιστα δ' αἰεὶ τῶι θανόντι γίνεται. (For no-one is respected or famous among his citizens after his death; we rather pursue the favour of the living while we live; the dead are always treated in the worst way.) (fr. 133 West).

Returning to the verdict of Gow and Page, we now see that this elegy does in fact reveal interesting facts about Posidippus and his aspirations. He confidently and purposefully presents himself to his contemporary readers as a divinely honored, broadly successful poet beloved by the Macedonians, whose fame endures in statues, and whose poetry resulted in material comforts. Indeed, it almost seems as if *statues* rather than his actual works must proclaim his poetical success. His envisaged immortality is ensured by mystic initiation and sound morals rather than by the proverbial enduring *kleos* of poetry. Unlike other contemporary poets, he presents himself as wealthy, and not ashamed of this fact. That he chooses poor and immoral Archilochus as a foil, whose reputation, based on his own poetry, was proverbially bad, suggests that by these anomalous statements Posidippus wished to actively influence the perception of contemporaries and future readers. If despite a negative reputation Archilochus was greatly and enduringly honored as a poet, then what enormous extra benefits might the self proclaimed reputation of success and sound morals provide Posidippus with!

6.3. *Role-Playing versus Self-Portrayal*

Apart from a very clear self portrayal, another possibility for a poet is to adopt a consciously fictive role. This happens when he creates a personality that differs from his historical personality or poetic persona. These alternatives may seem diametrically opposed, yet both find their origin in the fact that (written) poem and poet were no longer automatically coupled at the occasion of performance in the Hellenistic Age. Peter Bing has insightfully described how this happens in the manipulation of the speaking voice in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, with specific reference to the issues of poetic voice(s) in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.[28]

More broadly speaking, Callimachus' manipulation of his readers in these poems works on the following principle: when reading a first person utterance without a context, a diligent reader will try to identify the speaker from the text and, if necessary, mentally reconstruct the implied occasion of performance or imagined situation of utterance. The

[28] Bing (1993: 181–198). In a way, the practice is similar to what Bing has also observed in Callimachus' epigrams, and which he calls *Ergänzungsspiel*: the reader is invited actively to participate in the recreation of the presupposed situation the poem describes. Bing (1995: 117–123), cf. Meyer (2005).

reader must rely upon hints in the text about the identity of the speaker (e.g., male or female qualifying adjectives, participles, or pronouns) and references to the situation at the moment of speech (e.g., time of day, location, and address to interlocutors). This process lends itself to experiment and manipulation, as the creation of "insubstantial"[29] or at least elusive voices in the poetry of Callimachus demonstrates, particularly in his so-called mimetic hymns (II, V, VI).[30]

This can be explained as follows. In the Hellenistic age, literary and poetic texts of the Greek past that had originally been intended for oral performance were preserved on scrolls and read privately and individually rather than performed publicly.[31] Parts of the context and code that would have helped original audiences to understand such poems (in particular their deictic references) and identify their first-person speakers were thus lost to third-century readers. This loss of context arguably also influenced the Hellenistic poets' way of looking at first-person utterances in such texts, as Bing suggests. Hellenistic poets, in their scholarly occupation noticed that some first-person passages had become obscure through loss of their original context. This is most notably suggested by the *scholia vetera* to the *Victory Odes* and *Paeans* of Pindar, which often struggle with the question of whether the poet or the chorus (or both or either) is supposed to be speaking in a particular passage, or whether they are perhaps even "voicing the sentiments of the victor."[32] It is likely that the Alexandrians, who seriously occupied themselves with the study and critical assessment of such texts (in particular Pindar's), were aware of this problem.

As a scholar who spent a great deal of his time studying and analyzing ancient scrolls, Callimachus must have realized that his own poems too would be *read* in the future rather than performed. This explains why he deliberately creates in his *Hymns* various (fictitious) "lost contexts:"

[29] The phrase is Hopkinson's, with reference to the narrator in Call. *Hymn* VI.

[30] On insubstantial voices in Callimachus, cf. Harder (1992: 384–394; 2001: 399–416; 2004: 63–81), Bing (1993: 181–198).

[31] On how this affected the metrical choices of Hellenistic poets, see Hunter (1996: 4–5): recitative meters gradually replace lyrical ones. On the general loss of performance occasions and its effect on Hellenistic poetics, see Hunter and Fantuzzi (2004: 1–17).

[32] Cf. Lefkowitz (1991: 72–88) who argues that the whole (mistaken) idea that the *Victory Odes* contain changes of speaker can be retraced to these critics. A point in case is P. 5.72–80, where the scholiast remarks ὁ λόγος ἀπὸ τοῦ χοροῦ τῶν Λιβύων ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ. Even today the question remains disputed, as Race's note (1997: *ad loc.*) demonstrates.

the ritual bath of (the statue of) Pallas at Argos, and the festivals of Apollo at Delos, and of Demeter (at an unspecified location). He pretends that the text of these hymns were originally pronounced in these particular settings. This effect is achieved by "throwing the reader in the middle of proceedings" without any authorial frame, and subsequently using a great number of deictic references to the purported circumstances.

The unusualness of this practice may be demonstrated by contrasting it with the 18th *Idyll* of Theocritus, the *epithalamium* of Helen sung by Spartan maidens, which is framed by remarks of an external primary narrator, who sketches the background before giving the floor, as it were, to a group of Spartan maidens.[33]

> Ἔν ποκ' ἄρα Σπάρτᾳ ξανθότριχι πὰρ Μενελάῳ
> παρθενικαὶ θάλλοντα κόμαις ὑάκινθον ἔχοισαι
> πρόσθε νεογράπτω θαλάμω χορὸν ἐστάσαντο,
> δώδεκα ταὶ πρᾶται πόλιος, μέγα χρῆμα Λακαινᾶν,
> ἁνίκα Τυνδαρίδα κατεκλᾴξατο τὰν ἀγαπατάν
> μναστεύσας Ἑλέναν ὁ νεώτερος Ἀτρέος υἱῶν.
> ἄειδον δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἐς ἓν μέλος ἐγκροτέοισαι
> ποσσὶ περιπλέκτοις, ὑπὸ δ' ἴαχε δῶμ' ὑμεναίῳ·
> "Οὕτω δὴ πρωιζὰ κατέδραθες, ὦ φίλε γαμβρέ;" (*Id.* 18, 1–9)

> Once then, in Sparta, at the palace of golden-haired Menelaus, maidens, with blooms of hyacinth in their hair arrayed the dance before the new-painted bridal chamber—twelve in number were they, the foremost in the town, fair flower of Laconian maidenhood—when Atreus' younger son had closed its doors on his loved Helen, Tyndareus' daughter, whom he had wooed and won. And all in unison they sang, beating time with weaving feet to their song, while the house rang with the bridal hymn. "Have you fallen asleep so early, dear bridegroom?" (transl. Gow; the song of the girls continues for 50 lines; there is no return to the authorial frame.)

Theocritus could have made the Spartan maidens speak directly and let readers of his poem imagine the singers, setting, and context of the song for themselves. Instead, however, he chose to provide them with a background. In other dramatic monologues and dialogues, Theocritus does use the dramatic technique that throws the reader in the middle of a scene without a narrative introduction (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 14, and 15); the same happens in the *Mimiambs* of Herondas. However, these poems are "mimes," little plays that may or may not have been intended for fully-fledged dramatic performance or less dramatic "recital" but that

[33] Cf. *Id.* 6 and 11.

at least descend from a *dramatic* ancestry.[34] The primary ancestor of Callimachus' *Hymns* is not in first instance drama, but rather the choral lyric celebration of cultic festive rituals such as can be found in ancient performative texts (Pindar's epinicia, or the *Partheneia* of Alcman). These texts frequently contain references to affairs contingent to the original performance, including names, topography, and deictic expressions.[35] To create a similar illusion of missing contexts, Callimachus makes the first—person speaker in his mimetic hymns similarly address persons imagined to be present, and use deictic references to imagined circumstances.[36] A comparison between a fragment of Alcman's *Partheneion* (6th century BCE) and the opening of the Callimachean *Hymn to Apollo* (II) will illustrate the point:

> ἦ οὐχ ὁρῆις; ὁ μὲν κέλης
> Ἐνετικός· ἁ δὲ χαίτα
> τᾶς ἐμᾶς ἀνεψιᾶς
> Ἁγησιχόρας ἐπανθεῖ
> χρυσὸς [ὡ]ς ἀκήρατος·
> τό τ' ἀργύριον πρόσωπον,
> διαφάδαν τί τοι λέγω;
> Ἁγησιχόρα μὲν αὕτα· (Alcman fr. 1 *PMG* 50–57)

> Can't you see? The courser is a Venetian Horse, and the hair of my cousin Hagesichora blooms like pure gold; her face is silver. Why must I tell you more clearly? There is Hagesichora herself!

In this passage from Alcman's famous *Partheneion*, the chorus of maidens is apparently singing about one in their midst (perhaps, considering her name, their leader); this is made explicit in 56/7. This utterance would presumably have been accompanied by some gesture or choreographed

[34] They owe much to the mimes of Sophron (fifth cent. BCE), who is indebted to, or represents a variant of, the Athenian dramatic form.

[35] Harder (1992: 385, n. 7) recognizes that there may be a relation between the mimetic elements in Call. *Hymns*, the hints of mimesis in the *HH* and the conventions of choral lyric, but she leaves this unexplored. For the difficulty of understanding Alcman's *Partheneia* owing to their highly contingent references, see Campbell (1982 [1967] *ad loc.*), Robbins (1997: 224–225). In *HH Apoll.* 156–175, the Delian or Hyperborean Maidens are apostrophized as if present. See on the reception of this hymn in Call. *Hymn* II, Bing (1993: 181–198).

[36] Harder (1992: 386–387; 389) lists various means of creating the illusion of a (lost) occasion, such as the address of a more or less well-defined fictional audience; the indications that a speaker is fixed in time and space (e.g. familiarizing articles indicating a location, to imply that events are seen from the perspective of the speaker as "*erlebendes Ich*"); deictic words indicating time; use of present and future tense referring to the actual situation and the speaker's expectations.

move pointing out which of the girls was Hagesichora. The many other mysterious references in the fragmentary poem (to unknown gods, rivalling choruses, girls in the chorus, and festive activities on subsequent days) are also contingent to the original context of the performance in early Spartan society and lead to contrary opinions in scholarship about the details of this occasion.[37] It is easy to imagine how tantalizing such texts appeared to Hellenistic scholars in later antiquity in their more complete forms.[38]

The elusive references in Alcman's *Partheneion* are comparable in many ways to the opening of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* (II), where a scene of epiphany at Apollo's Delian shrine is mimetically re-created in words. The echo of Alcman line 50 in οὐχ ὁράᾳς (Call. *Hymn* II, 4) provides a clear pointer to Callimachus' deliberate attempt to create the illusion of a real occasion:[39]

> Οἷον ὁ τὠπόλλωνος ἐσείσατο δάφνινος ὅρπηξ,
> οἷα δ' ὅλον τὸ μέλαθρον· ἑκὰς ἑκὰς ὅστις ἀλιτρός.
> καὶ δή που τὰ θύρετρα καλῷ ποδὶ Φοῖβος ἀράσσει·
> οὐχ ὁράᾳς; ἐπένευσεν ὁ Δήλιος ἡδύ τι φοῖνιξ
> ἐξαπίνης, ὁ δὲ κύκνος ἐν ἠέρι καλὸν ἀείδει. (*Hymn II*, 1–5)

> How Apollo's laurel sapling shook, how the whole temple shook with it! Back, back, all who have sinned! The doors are rattling: it must be Apollo striking them with his gleaming foot. Can't you see? All of a sudden the Delian Palm nodded with joy, and now the swan is singing high in the air, his lovely song. (transl. Nisetich)

By this technique, that is, by using an elusive voice to launch the reader into the middle of proceedings without any introduction to create the illusion of a real performance, Callimachus demonstrates his awareness of the complexities that accrue to reading and interpreting ancient texts out of their context. He imitates and creates a similar situation for his readers.

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[37] Cf. Campbell (1982 [1967] *ad loc.*), Robbins (1997: 243–253) Hutchinson (2001, *ad loc.*).

[38] Robbins (1997: 224) remarks: "Probably because of the parochial nature of his poetry, [Alcman] was considered a difficult poet, and this explains why he attracted considerable attention from scholars in antiquity." An example of creative reception of the *Partheneia* may be found in Theoc. *Id.* 18, cf. Hunter (1996: 139–166). As noted however, Theocritus places the song of the maidens in a historical context by the brief frame.

[39] In Call. *Hymn* II, there appears to be more than one speaker, cf. Bing (1993: 181–198.)

6.4. *Allusive Names, Elusive Poets*

In some Hellenistic *sphragis*-poetry, the name of the author is expressed ambiguously or indirectly. The modern reader's uncertainty about its meaning may arise from the loss of knowledge that was presumably common among contemporaries of the poets. In some cases, such as the alternation Asclepiades/Sicelidas, the most likely assumption is that the alternative name was used as normally and frequently as the name that is more familiar to the modern reader.[40] The case is more uncertain for Callimachus/Battiades. Is the alternative name a patronymic or was it chosen by the poet in connection with the colonist Battus, in reference to Callimachus' ties to his mother city, Cyrene and to Cyrenaic aristocracy? The status of "Simichidas," the alternative name that Theocritus appears to use to refer to himself in *Idyll* 7, remains enigmatic and subject to ongoing debate to this day.

In some cases, the well known proper name of an author may be used in such a way as to contain hidden puns that need to be decoded or even discovered. The epigrammatist Crates (*AP* 11.218) pretended to blame Euphorion for his literary tastes while playing on the obscene *double entendres* on the names of the authors he mentions (Chapter 4.8). In Chapter 5, the clever play on Aratus' own name in the second line of the *Phaenomena* (ἄρρητον) was for instance discussed.

The Greeks felt that names and nouns (ὀνόματα κυρία) could reveal important facts about the object or person they indicated to those who were perceptive to the "true meaning" (ἔτυμος λόγος) they conveyed.[41] Some instances of this belief could be subsumed under the category *nomen est omen*, literally, "the name is a sign or a token." This resulted in *kledonomancy*, divination from names, "a system which operates on the conviction that language possesses an enigmatic oracular capacity to bear unexpected meaning not intended or even understood by the speaker."[42] The belief that proper names could contain hidden meanings is attested

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[40] The alternative name Sicelidas is found in Mel. *AP* 4.1.45; Hedyl. Ath. 1173A (VI GP) and Theoc. 7.39–41, cf. the *scholia ad loc.*, who claim that it is a patronymic.

[41] Since most Greek proper names originally possessed an easily distinguishable meaning, deriving from a characteristic (physical, behavioral or otherwise, cf. *DNP s.v. Onomastik*), the origins of this belief are easy to understand. With the passage of time it was especially names of which the significance had become obsolete for which false etymologies could be established to provide a new significance.

[42] So Zeitlin (1982: 46) on Aeschylus, especially on his explanation of the name Helen (which he connects to the root ἑλ-, "to destroy," *Ag.* 681–690). On etymology in general, see also Woodhead (1928: 22–23), O'Hara (1996: 13).

as early as Homer.[43] Words and names were explained in various ways that were later united under the heading "etymology" (ἐτυμολογία), the science of the true explanation of a name or word.[44] From a modern linguist's viewpoint, many examples of ancient etymology would be more accurately classified as verbal or stylistic playfulness, puns that play on phonetic and formal ambiguities or analogies (e.g. paronomasia,[45] *figura etymologica*).[46]

"Etymologies" on (proper) names of individuals as well as peoples, cities and lands are extremely frequent in Greek literature. Thus, famously, in the *Odyssey*, a notable example occurs when Autolycus decides that his grandson is to be called "Odysseus" since many are angry with Autolycus at the moment the boy is born (ὀδύσσομαι, to hate, *Od.* 19.409). The connotations of this name, the epic implies, also apply to Odysseus himself.[47] Names or sobriquets of poets are often explained in a similar way: Στησίχορος means "He who sets up the chorus"[48] Μουσαῖος means "Belonging to the Muse." The alias Solon uses for Mimnermus (Λιγυαστάδη, fr. 20 W), is explained by the *Suda s.v.* Μίμνερμος as deriving from the adjective λιγύς (ἐκαλεῖτο δὲ καὶ Λιγυαστάδης διὰ τὸ ἐμμελὲς καὶ λιγύ: he was called Ligyastades because of his harmoniousness and his clear [voice].)[49]

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43 For some salutary *caveats* on the interpretation and "discovery" of etymologies and puns in ancient texts (how can one be sure that the etymology is intended?), see Haslam (1992: 199–204); O'Hara (1996: 5).

44 The first to use this word was presumably Philoxenus of Alexandria, a grammarian of the first century BCE. However, the process of etymologizing had been current in non-systematical form long before. The first (ironical) reflection on quasi-scientific attempts at etymology can be found in Plato's *Cratylus*. A treatise attributed to Augustine, but preserving material from centuries earlier, explains the four principles governing ancient etymological derivations: 1) κατὰ μίμησιν: by imitating sounds, or by using sounds whose smoothness, harshness and so on mimicked that of the thing named; 2) κατ' ὁμοιότητα: from the similarity of one thing to another; 3) κατ' ἀναλογίαν: by association, i.e., *paronomasia* and *figura etymologica*; 4) κατ' ἀντίφρασιν: a name indicates the opposite of a thing or some property it has, cf. O'Hara (1996: 20).

45 When there is a likeness in sound, but it is not (necessarily) intended that the words are "etymologically" related, e.g. *Il.* 16.22: τοῖον γὰρ *ἄχος* βεβίηκεν *Ἀχαιούς*. (such woe befell the Achaeans).

46 Where a derivation is clearly intended, e.g.: Odysseus from ὀδύσσομαι.

47 Cf. Louden (1995: 27–46) see also Soph. fr. 965 Radt: ὀρθῶς δ' Ὀδυσσεύς εἰμ' ἐπώνυμος κακῶν· // πολλοὶ γὰρ ὠδύσαντο δυσμενεῖς ἐμοί. (Rightly am I called Odysseus for my woes; for many enemies hate me).

48 Whose original name was Teisias, according to the *Suda s.v.* Στησίχορος. Bowra (1936: 79) suggests that the sobriquet may be based upon some passage of Stesichorus' poetry now lost, in which he spoke about his own name and origin.

49 A similar claim is made in the *Suda* about the alias of Simonides, Μελικέρτης (on

The scholarly Hellenistic poets continued and intensified the interest in the possibilities of etymologizing and wordplay as heuristic devices to explain origins of customs, cities, and geographical landmarks, festivals, cletic titles of deities, proper names of their characters, and so on.[50] In this cultural context, some reflection of the intense interest in the true or alleged meanings and derivations of their own names is only to be expected.[51]

6.5. *Punning and Wordplay*

It has been observed that the proems of the *Argonautica* of Apollonius and the *Phaenomena* share some salient features, including a hymnic opening to a god that is central to the poem, Zeus (Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, from Zeus let us begin ...)[52] and Apollo (Ἀρχόμενος σέο Φοῖβε, beginning from you, Phoebus ...), respectively. Both also contain a belated and remarkably phrased invocation of the Muses.[53] A punning allusion to the author's name may be a characteristic that should be added to this list of similarities. Aratus modestly placed the pun on his own name in the second place, after Zeus (ἄρρητον, 2); it might be argued that Apollonius was alluding to his own name in the beginning of the *Argonautica* through the invocation of his eponymous god Apollo.

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a derivation from μέλι or μελιχρός): ὃς ἐπεκλήθη Μελικέρτης διὰ τὸ ἡδύ. (who was also called Melicertes because of his sweetness). Cf. the explanations of Plato's name as provided e.g. in Diog. Laert. 3.4, linking it with the adjective πλατύς (wide, broad), which might refer to his style.

[50] Callimachus' *Aetia* and *Hymns* and Apollonius' *Argonautica* reveal a distinct interest in the explication of names. Contemporary scientific prose treatises also evidence an interest in etymology: Ἐθνικαὶ Ὀνομασίαι (Local Nomenclature), Περί Μετονομασίας Ἰχθύων (On Changes of Names in Fish), Μηνῶν Προσηγορίαι κατὰ ἔθνος καὶ πόλεις (Local Month-Names), Κτίσεις Νήσων καὶ πολέων καὶ μετονομασίαι (Colonizations of Islands and Cities and their Changes of Names), cf. *Suda s.v.* Καλλίμαχος.

[51] For a more playful approach to naming and names (anagrams) in the Hellenistic era, see Cameron (1995b: 477–484).

[52] Although Theocritus *Id.* 17 also begins with this phrase, later writers explicitly attribute the phrase to Aratus (Strato *AP* 12.1.1: Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, καθὼς εἴρηκεν Ἄρατος, "Let us begin from Zeus," as Aratus said). Cf. also Cic. *Rep.* 1.36; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.46; Macr. *Somn.* 1.17.14; see also the lengthy commentary in the *Scholia* (Martin) on the first line and Kidd (1997: 163).

[53] *Phaen.* 16–17; *Arg.* 1.20–22, cf. Ch. 7.3–7.6 On the structural similarity between the openings, and the remarkable choice of verb in the address to the Muses, cf. Kidd (1997: 162–163; 174 respectively). The Aratus-*Scholia* mention the parallel of Apollonius (*Schol. Arat. Vat.* 191); the *Scholia* on *Arg.* (1–4a) mention the opening of the *Phaen.*

The pun at the opening of the *Phaenomena* is paradoxical. While appearing to name Aratus, it implies at the same time that his name should go *unmentioned*. How does this relate to Apollonius' choice to call on Apollo, while using the invocational title "Phoebus" (1.1)? Perhaps a similarly paradoxical modesty is at play here. Robert Albis suggests that Apollonius invokes Apollo as Phoebus perhaps to avoid making the play on names too obvious:

> Elsewhere however, Apollonius frequently refers to the god as Apollo, and when the name appears in the genitive, it differs from the poet's only by one iota (…) The similarity of the names of the god and the poet suggests that Apollonius has a special relationship with Phoebus. Apollonius means, after all "belonging to Apollo." In the context of poetic inspiration this relationship has a special resonance. A divinely inspired poet is "*entheos*" [possessed by a god]. (Albis, 1996: 22)

Albis' observations gain force when combined with the play on Aratus' name, which was remarked upon by his contemporaries.[54] Both puns occur in the opening lines of the poems, the perfect place for a *sphragis*. Both authors, Aratus and Apollonius, allude to their name in their praise of their patron god, and both leave their name unmentioned. Their signature is thus paradoxically hinted at and hidden simultaneously.

Two epigrams by Callimachus are of interest as well, since he appears to be exploiting the connotations of his own name (Καλλίμαχος) and his patronymic, as it shall provisionally be called, Battiades (*AP* 7.525). It seems that the two poems are related to each other[55] and that both make a definitive statement about Callimachus' poetics. Let us begin with the epigram on Callimachus' father.

> Ὅστις ἐμὸν παρὰ σῆμα φέρεις πόδα, Καλλιμάχου με
> ἴσθι Κυρηναίου παῖδά τε καὶ γενέτην.
> εἰδείης δ' ἄμφω κεν· ὁ μέν κοτε πατρίδος ὅπλων
> ἦρξεν, ὁ δ' ἤεισεν κρέσσονα βασκανίης. (*AP* 7.525)

> You, who are passing by my grave, know that I am of Callimachus the Cyrenaic both son and father. You would know both: one once was the chief of his fatherland's armed forces; the other's song was stronger than envy.

[54] Cf. Ch. 5.2.

[55] Scholars have regularly assumed that the two poems were companion pieces, e.g. Wilamowitz (1924: I, 175, n. 2), Gabathuler (1937: 5), Fraser (1972: I, 576), Bing (1995: 126–128), Gutzwiller (1998: 212).

The speaker in the poem is the father of Callimachus, who is, however, not named.[56] His modesty is emphasized by this omission even while he is immortalized by his famous son's poetry.[57] The token by which this man wants to be known, or so the epigram claims, is the paradoxical circumstance that he is both son and father of Callimachus. This "riddle" is solved by the explanation that there are two persons bearing the name Callimachus, one a general (1–2) and one a poet whose song was stronger than envy (4), an expression with somewhat belligerent undertones.

This gives rise to a new riddle: how can these two namesakes be likened to each other? How do they both live up to their name? The *pointe* of the epigram may be that the two bearers of the same name, while having at first sight very different occupations, were in some sense as alike as their name suggests. The grandfather of Callimachus was a distinguished warrior. Callimachus the grandson was the vanquisher of envy through his song; he was a "warrior with words." And so, both Callimachuses lived to gain fame for their name, which might etymologically be explained to contain the elements κάλλος (beauty) and μάχη (battle). The notoriously belligerent persona of Callimachus, as known from works such as the prologue of the *Aetia* (fr. 1 Pf.) and the *Iambi* (cf. Chapter 4), fits the meaning of his name surprisingly well.[58]

The second epigram leaves out the name "Callimachus" and only refers to him by what scholarship has predominantly accepted as a patronymic, Battiades:[59]

Βαττιάδεω παρὰ σῆμα φέρεις πόδας εὖ μὲν ἀοιδήν
εἰδότος, εὖ δ' οἴνῳ καίρια συγγελάσαι. (*AP* 7.415)

You are passing the grave of Battiades, who knew well how to sing and how to tell jokes properly over wine.

56 It has been suggested e.g. by Gow and Page (1965: II, *ad loc.*) that, as often happens in non-literary epitaphs, the name may not have fitted the meter; the reader would have inferred that this was the reason for its omission. Alternatively, as noted, *AP* 7.415 could be read in conjunction with this poem, and so supply the name of the unnamed father of Callimachus, viz. Battus.

57 Wilamowitz (1924: I, 175, n. 2) suggested—surely somewhat naively—that Callimachus could not write much about his father, because there just was not much to say about him.

58 Ferguson (1970: 66), without however referring to this epigram, remarks: "Certainly in general Callimachus lived up to his name *Glory in Battle*."

59 The reader would have known that Callimachus was meant anyway, as the epigram was presumably found in a collection of Callimachus' poetry, cf. Meyer (2005: 171).

The epigram has been read as an evaluation of Callimachus' complete poetic output. The phrase εὖ μὲν ἀοιδήν / εἰδότος, εὖ δ' οἴνῳ καίρια συγγελάσαι could be said to cover the whole range, from Callimachus' longer poems (ἀοιδήν: the *Hecale*, the *Aetia*, the *Hymns* etc.) to the poetry that is exemplified by the present poem, epigrams that were composed or performed at symposia (καίρια).[60] The first and last words (εἰδότος ... συγγελάσαι) of the second line moreover aptly describe the whole field in which Callimachus' poetry finds itself: it is not only learned and scholarly, but also ironic and tongue in cheek.[61] The fact that the epitaph should be so concise yet express all the essentials about its author and subject reveals much about Callimachus' poetic ideals as exemplified and expressed elsewhere.[62] His preference is for short, subtle, and witty poetry, such as this epigram.

The fact that Callimachus here calls himself "Battiades" (i.e., the descendant of Battus, the hero who founded Cyrene and first of a long list of eponymous kings) has usually been linked to his connections with Cyrenaic aristocracy, or more broadly, to his patriotic feelings for the colony of Cyrene as a whole.[63] Another interpretation simply explains "Battus" as the actual proper name of his father.[64] Whichever of these possibilities is correct, the literal meaning of the name is also of interest. In Greek, Βάττος means "Stammerer," or "Lisper" (i.e., someone with

[60] Cf. e.g. Reitzenstein (1893: 87), Parsons (2002: 104; 129): "Callimachus represents half his life as οἴνῳ καίρια συγγελάσαι," "[The epigram] ostensibly opens a divide between ἀοιδή and the opportunist wit of the symposium."

[61] Cf. Reitzenstein (1893: 87).

[62] E.g *Aetia* fr. 1 Pf., *Hymn* II, 105–113, *AP* 9.566.

[63] Cf. Cameron (1995: 8). White (1999: 168–181) argues that antiquity would not have understood the name as a *direct* patronymic, but as referring more broadly to ethnic ties and ancestry, Callimachus' relation to the founder of his father city Cyrene, the heroic Battus (celebrated e.g. in Pi. *P.* 4 and 9). Cf. e.g. Call. *Hymn* II, 96; Str. 17.3.21: λέγεται δὲ ἡ Κυρήνη κτίσμα Βάττου· πρόγονον δὲ τοῦτον ἑαυτοῦ φάσκει Καλλίμαχος. (Cyrene is said to be a settlement by Battus; Callimachus claims to be a descendant of his). Reitzenstein (1893: 233–234) thought that the character Battus in Theoc. *Id.* 4 constituted a reference to Callimachus. This forms part of his *bucolic masquerade*-thesis which has been discarded, cf. e.g. Treu (1963: 273–290). The occurrence of the name in Theocritus is however quite striking; certainly considering the claim of White that Battus was an extremely unusual name. *Battiades* is the name the Roman poets use to indicate Callimachus (Cat. 65.16; 116.2; Ov. *Am.* 1.15.13, *Ib.* 55, *Tr.* 2.367, Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.157) As Gow and Page (1965: II, 152) suggest, this might indicate that he called himself thus elsewhere besides.

[64] Cf. Wilamowitz (1924: I, 175, n. 2), Gabathuler (1937: 5), Fraser (1972: I, 576), Bing (1995: 126–128), Gutzwiller (1998: 212).

a speech-impediment).[65] In Herodotus' account of the colonization of Cyrene, the naming of Battus, later king of this settlement is explained thus (*Hist.* 4.155):

> Χρόνου δὲ περιιόντος ἐξεγένετό οἱ παῖς ἰσχόφωνος καὶ τραυλός, τῷ οὔνομα ἐτέθη Βάττος.
>
> And as time went by he [i.e., Battus' father] begot a child that had difficulty speaking and stammered, to whom the name Battus [Stammerer] was given.[66]

Interestingly, Herodotus' account of the colonization of Cyrene contains a significant equivocation on the name of Battus; the name turns out to be a lucky omen. As Battus arrives at the shrine of Delphic Apollo to ask the Pythia what to do about his voice, she replies:

> "Βάττ', ἐπὶ φωνὴν ἦλθες· ἄναξ δέ σε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων / ἐς Λιβύην πέμπει μηλοτρόφον οἰκιστῆρα."
>
> "Battus, you have come to ask about your voice, but the Lord Apollo sends you out to Libya rich in sheep as a colonist."

Herodotus explains that this is as much as saying "Ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἐπὶ φωνὴν ἦλθες" ("King, you have come to ask about your voice"), since in Libyan the word βάττος meant "king." And indeed, "King" was the title by which Battus was subsequently addressed as founder of the colony Cyrene.

Callimachus was probably aware of this story, and he may have meant to hint that Battus was a name of good omen, as history had proved. He may moreover have wished to create a meaningful opposition between the connotations of the name "Son of the Stammerer" and the fact that he was a succesful poet who suffered from no verbal impediments at all. Indeed, Hesychius *s.v.* βαττολογία defines it as ἀργολογία, *ἀκαιρο*λογία (to prattle unseasonably).[67] This suggests that the reference to his patronymic or alias should be understood as an instance of the explanation of a name κατ' ἀντίφρασιν (by expressing the contrary).[68] The name is a paradoxical token of Callimachus' fluent yet concise poetic speech, his specific ability of *καίρια* συγγελάσαι.

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[65] Cf. LSJ *s.v.*, quoting Hesych. and *Suda*. It is believed to be an onomatopoeic word. The verb βαττολογεῖν/βατταρίζω means "to stammer," or "to say the same word over and over again."

[66] According to Call. *Hymn* II, 76, Battus' "original" name was Aristoteles.

[67] Cf. also *Suda s.v.* βαττολογία; cf. LSJ *s.v.* ἀκαιρία (4) "bad taste in writing" (D.H. *Dem.* 7).

[68] Cf. *lucus a non lucendo* ([It is called] a grove because there is no light in it; Honoratus Maurus, fourth cent. CE).

6.6. *Theocritus, Simichidas and Lycidas*

The question of the exact relation between Simichidas, Lycidas, and the poet Theocritus in *Idyll* 7 is the last topic of this chapter. In this case, however, something different from and perhaps more fundamental than the play on a name is involved. The issue is nevertheless linked to the previous discussion, since it starts out from the difficult interpretation of what is usually considered an alias, Simichidas. Considering the programmatic significance of Theocritus' seventh *Idyll*,[69] the characterization of Simichidas in the poem is of paramount importance, since he is its internal narrator.[70] In order to get a better understanding of what is at stake in the following discussion, a brief synopsis of the narrative contents of the poem is necessary.

At the poem's opening an internal narrator starts relating how, once upon a time,[71] he was on his way to the celebration of the Harvest Festival (*Thalysia*) organized by some aristocratic friends on the island of Cos. Together with his friends Eucritus and Amyntas, he departed from the city towards the farm of the organizers of the *Thalysia* (1–4). On the way, in the noonday heat, they met a mysterious goatherd, named Lycidas (10–14), whose looks and smell are described in great detail (15–20). This Lycidas addresses the previously nameless narrator of the *Idyll* as "Simichidas" (21); there is no explanation of their knowledge of each other's names. The narrator proposes they exchange bucolic songs (36). After some preliminary remarks on fame and poetic creeds (37–41, 45–48) and the promise of a guest gift, a staff or stick (κορύναν/λαγωβόλον) on the part of Lycidas (43), they sing; the exchange takes up a major part of the poem (51–126). Afterwards, Lycidas hands Simichidas the guest gift and suddenly disappears in another direction (129); the narrator and his friends reach the farm, where a lush symposium in a *locus amoenus*, described in picturesque and sensuous detail, is held (130–157).

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[69] Cf. Gow (1952: II, introduction to the *Idyll*), Lawall (1967), Weingarth (1967), Goldhill (1991), Hunter (1999).

[70] On the narrators in Theocritus' *Idylls*, see Hunter (2004: 83–97).

[71] Cf. Wilamowitz (1924: II, 142): "*Theokrit hat durch das Anfangswort es war einmal das Erlebnis, von dem er erzählt, in eine unbestimmte Ferne gerückt, alsob es ein Märchen wäre*." Gow (1952: II, 131): "the Greek implies only that the epoch referred to is closed, or the state of affairs no longer existing, not that it belongs to the distant past … The opening suggests that T.'s circumstances have changed in some way—for instance that he or his friends are no longer in Cos." Clauss (2003: 289) remarks that the parallels Gow adduces would seem to support both the interpretation of Wilamowitz and his own.

The significance of this "exchange of bucolic song" (which was first converted into a poetic form by Theocritus, cf. Chapter 3.7) and of the particularly evocative description of the rural symposium at the end depends on the appraisal of the status of the poem as a whole, and of that of the protagonists in particular. Is everything what it looks like on the surface? This point is related to the question of the identifications of Simichidas and Lycidas, which have been variously evaluated.[72]

The *Scholia*, in accordance with the practice of biographical readings of poetry in (late) antiquity in general, mostly assume that Simichidas is an alias of the author and that the whole poem should be read as an autobiographical record. They consequently interpret the name Simichidas as either a patronymic, derived from a father who was named Simichos or Simichidas,[73] or as a kind of sobriquet (ἐπώνυμον) referring to a certain physical feature of the poet, namely his flat nose.[74] In any case, they mostly appear sure that he is to be equated with the poet.[75]

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[72] Scholarship on the seventh *Idyll* comprises ca. 220 publications, including numerous books. I signal the most important trends in the scholarship concerning this "enigmatic masterpiece" (Gow). In Weingarth (1967) a full discussion of the scholarship up to that year can be found; Hunter (1999) provides a useful update. An important recent study of the *Idylls* is Payne (2007).

[73] *Vita*: πατρὸς Σιμίχου, ὥς αὐτός φησι (Whose father is Simichos, as he himself claims.); cf. *Schol.* 21a,b: ὁ Θεόκριτος Σιμιχίδα υἱος ὢν Σιμιχίδαν ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζει πατρωνυμικῶς. (Theocritus, the son of Simichidas, calls himself Simichidas with a patronymic). The *Vita, Suda* and the (Hellenistic?) epigram that was presumably affixed to the *Idylls* also name an alternative father, namely Praxagoras (3). This rings truer, since there is not, as in the case of "Simichos," an obvious text-internal reason for calling Th.'s father thus.

[74] *Prol.* 3: ἦν γὰρ τὴν ῥῖνα σιμός. (for he was snub-nosed), cf. *Schol.* 21a. Although this too is problematic, at least, if we believe, with Petroll (1965: 35) that the first person speaker of *Id.* 12 should be identified with the poet, because there he mentions his ῥινὸς … ἀραιῆς (slender, straight nose). In *Id.* 3, a goatherd complains that he has a σιμός nose. It seems to have been considered a typical characteristic of goatherds.

[75] Cf. *Argumentum c* (referring to *Id.* 7.1 ff.): προλογίζει ὁ Θεόκριτος. (Theocritus speaks in the prologue). The *Suda* also seems to consider it possible, cf. the explanation *s.v.* Θεόκριτος. So also the epigram appended to the *scholia* after *Id.* 18, beginning Σιμιχίδα Θεόκριτε. There seems to have been yet another school of thought: οἱ δὲ *ἕτερόν τινα τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ οὐ Θεόκριτον* διὰ τὸ "Σιμιχίδᾳ μὲν Ἔρωτες ἐπέπταρον. (v. 96)" (Some think that [Simichidas refers] to one of the others in his company, not to Theocritus, because of the phrase "the Loves have sneezed for Simichidas.") They differentiate between Theocritus and Simichidas without, however, explaining why the *narrator* is addressed by Lycidas as "Simichidas." The name Simichidas further occurs in an ingenious pun in the pseudo-Theocritean *technopaegnion Syrinx* (on its spuriousness, cf. Gow 1952: II, 553–554), viz. in the enigma/pun Πάρις Σιμιχίδας: Paris was the judge (κριτής) in the beauty-contest of the goddesses (θεῶν), hence Θεό-κριτος. Nickau (2002:

In the nineteenth century and well into the first half of the twentieth, a biographical reading of the seventh *Idyll* remained the predominant approach. However, attempts were repeatedly made to "unmask" Simichidas as well as Lycidas as participants in a *masquerade bucolique* with cultic or secular overtones.[76] This did not influence the biographical approach,[77] so that a meta-poetic interpretation of the poem in which the events should be understood symbolically rather than literally could not be undertaken.

Such a symbolic interpretation only became possible when scholars recognized that the use of the name "Simichidas" rather than "Theocritus" might convey an essential difference on some level between the first person narrator and the "author" Theocritus. This is, for instance, hesitatingly expressed by Gow:

> Simichidas describes in the first person an experience which evidently reflects, in part at least, an experience of Theocritus himself. "I" in literature may stand for the author himself (*Id.* 28) or for a character he has created (*Id.* 3); between these extremes an author may identify himself not wholly but only in part with a character who uses the first person. Hence, though the speaker in *Id.* 7 is plainly in part the poet, the two are not necessarily identical (...) Still, it is most natural in this poem to assume the identity, and with this *caveat* I shall assume it and suppose Simichidas to be neither more nor less than an alias for Theocritus. (Gow, 1940: 47)

Nevertheless, the way was now open to readings that recognized a certain symbolic, meta-poetic quality in the poem. Thus, Sanchez-Wildberger

389–304) argues that the name Simichidas in *Id.* 7 indicates that Theocritus was a follower of the contemporary poet of *technopaegnia* (such as the *Syrinx*) *Simias*; his sobriquet would refer to this master.

76 This thesis proposed that all herdsmen in Theocritus' poetry were really portraits of contemporary poets in disguise, who convened on certain occasions to indulge in the simplicity of rural life. The idea was propounded especially by Reitzenstein (1893), but several others participated in the "guessing game" which resulted in manifold identifications, especially for Lycidas: Aratus (Bergk); Dosiadas (Wilamowitz), Leonidas (Legrand), Callimachus (Gercke), Astakides (Ribbeck), Rhianus (Legrand) or merely an "eccentric poet going about in herdsman's outfit." Wilamowitz later retracted his belief in the *masquerade bucolique* (1906: II, 136), although he still maintained that Lycidas could well be the Cretan poet Dosiadas.

77 Cf. e.g. the remarks of Wilamowitz (1924: II, 136): "*Der Eindruck wird nicht tauschen dass er wirklich die Erinnerung an das Erntefest wiedergibt, zu dem ihn Phrasidamos und Antigenes, die vornehmen Koer, eingeladen hatten. Simichidas ist ja Deckname für Theokrit, ob für diese Gelegenheit erfunden, oder weiter geltend, können wir ja nicht entscheiden. Versteck spielen wollte der Dichter doch nicht vor der Koische Gesellschaft, für die er zunächst dichtete.*" Similar views can be found as late as the 1960's, e.g. Petroll (1965: 32); Monteil (1968: 100).

(1955: 65 ff.) goes further than a straightforward identification of Simichidas and Theocritus and posits that Lycidas must also be a part of the "ego" of the poet. She regards the confrontation between the two poets in the *Idyll* as "*eine Doppelspiegelung des einen Theokrit*" (68); in her view, the songs of both singers present "*dieselbe seltsame Mischung von städtischem Leben und Bukolik.*" (67). There is, however, one major problem with this interpretation: if it is correct, then why is Simichidas, not Lycidas, the narrator? And why is the poem not composed in the form of a simple mimetic dialogue (cf. *Id.* 4, 5)?[78] Simichidas's role as the narrator undeniably gives him a greater claim to identification with the author than Lycidas; he is in control of the narration of this poetic encounter. This means Lycidas cannot be an alter ego on the same level as Simichidas.[79] This problem is solved in Händel's interpretation of the *Idyll* as an encounter between Theocritus (Simichidas) and one of his own fictions, Lycidas, "*einer jener idealisierten hochpoetischen Hirten wie man sie auch sonst in den bukolischen* Idyllen *findet.*"[80] Although this suggestion is plausible, it does not explain why the author needed to be called "Simichidas" rather than "Theocritus."

Another strain in the history of interpretation continued to attempt to identify Lycidas, while the Simichidas/Theocritus equation was simply accepted.[81] The first to make the important observation that the seventh *Idyll* contained elements of the *Dichterweihe*, as most famously found at the opening of Hesiod's *Theogony*, was Van Groningen (1959).[82] Building on this idea, Puelma (1960) remarked upon the similarities between the meeting of Simichidas and Lycidas and several meetings between gods and mortals in the Homeric epics.[83] The idea that Lycidas represents a

[78] Cf. Segal (1981: 125).

[79] Cf. also Petroll (1965: 44).

[80] Körte/Händel (1960 [1925]: 216). The reason he suggests for this fiction (viz. that Lycidas is introduced to convince readers that such herdsmen could actually exist) seems strangely naïve. Essentially, the "fiction"-thesis is also what Payne in his recent monograph propounds (2007: 119–145). He explains the name Simichidas as a heteronym (à la Pessoa), i.e. as a kind of branching off from the poet's *persona*.

[81] Cf. e.g. Petroll (1965: 32): "*Während die Identifikation Simichidas/Theokrit verhältnismässig einfach ist, hat die Gestalt des Lykidas den Forschern viel Kopfzerbrechen bereitet und zahlreiche Deutungsversuche hervorgerufen.*"

[82] These elements are: the mysterious meeting, the slightly abusive tone of the encounter, the reference to the springs (Burina, Hippocrene). Most important is the handing of the stick by Lycidas to Simichidas as "a guest gift in the Muses," cf. the handing of a laurel to Hesiod by the Muses.

[83] Cf. also Cameron (1963: 291–307) and Williams (1971: 137–145). The latter pro-

god in disguise was then propounded with force by a number of critics. Yet, they could never agree which divinity hid behind the goatherd who is so teasingly described as the quintessential goatherd.[84] This suggests that this reading, like the *masquerade bucolique*, was not the best way to approach the figure of Lycidas.[85]

Segal created a new range of possibilities by dispensing with exclusive identifications when he called Lycidas "a symbol:"

> A symbol cannot mean whatever the critic wants it to mean; but it is important to recognize that a symbol may have several related and interconnected meanings. Precisely because of the range of such interrelated meanings we can return to a literary work again and again and never fully exhaust its significance. (...) Thus there is no necessary contradiction in regarding [Lycidas] as a god, as an aspect of Theocritus' poetic personality, or (...) as a symbol of bucolic inspiration in general.
>
> (Segal, 1981: 114)

Segal takes his cues from structuralism and regards the confrontation of Simichidas and Lycidas as a series of binary oppositions between city (Simichidas) and wild countryside (Lycidas), civilization and nature, Demeter (goddess of the *Thalysia*) and Pan (god of herdsmen, flocks, and wild animals), reality and myth, irony and romance. He suggests that it is exactly in the interplay between these dichotomies that bucolic poetry gets its form; the encounter between Simichidas (the townsman) and Lycidas (the quintessential goatherd) takes place on a country road, a no-man's land between city and rough mountainsides, and leads to a celebration of the fruits of the tamed countryside, the *Thalysia*.[86] He regards the *Idyll* as an attempt of Theocritus the poet to come to terms with the opposing constituent elements of his new bucolic poetry.

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posed that Lycidas should be identified with the god of poetry and song Apollo, which would make the ironies involved in the condescending behavior of Simichidas towards Lycidas even greater.

[84] *Id.* 7.13–14: ἦς δ' αἰπόλος, οὐδέ κέ τίς νιν/ἠγνοίησεν ἰδών, ἐπεὶ αἰπόλῳ ἔξοχ' ἐῴκει. (His name was Lycidas, and he was a goatherd. Nor could you fail to recognize him as such, since he looked exceedingly like a goatherd).

[85] Gods that have been proposed: a satyr (Lawall, 1967); Apollo (Williams, 1971); Pan (Brown, 1981; recently defended anew by Clauss 2003). Segal's remark (1981: 122) seems most convincing: "Lycidas' divinity remains a hint only, a suggestion which the alert reader will keep in the back of his mind." Bowie (1985: 67–97) interprets Lycidas as a character from the lost poetry of Philitas. Barring the find of a Philitas-papyrus, this theory, though attractive, is impossible to prove.

[86] Segal (1981: 137). For contrast as a formative force in bucolic poetry, cf. also Ott (1969).

He also appears to be one of the first to fully realize the significance of the fact that "Simichidas" is an internal narrator who controls the narrative of the meeting, but that Theocritus the poet has deliberately *created* Simichidas as his alter ego:

> By enclosing the encounter within a frame and making it the subject of recollection by a first-person narrator, he forces us to see Lycidas from the point of view of Simichidas' I. This is not the device one would expect if the poem were merely trying to contrast two sides of Theocritus' poetry or personality, for then the two figures ought to stand on the same level of reality and objectivity. (Segal, 1981: 125)

This resembles the observation that Gutzwiller builds upon in her perceptive study of "pastoral analogy" as a determining constituent of bucolic poetry. She argues that the essential significance of the bucolic *Idylls* lies in the analogies constructed by the poet between the herdsman characters in the main body of the poem, and the figures of narrator and narratee in the frame. In the purely mimetic poems there is only an implied frame formed by the reader's experience; the analogy remains implicit.

In the sixth *Idyll*, for instance, the narrator addresses a certain Aratus and presents the dialogue of the two herdsmen Damoetas and Daphnis. The herdsmen in turn play the roles of the Cyclops in love with Galatea and a *praeceptor amoris*. In this *Idyll*, the utterances made at every level of the poem shed light upon the situation at another level. The situation of the Cyclops and Galatea may in some way reflect the situation between the shepherds Damoetas and Daphnis; the implication may be that they are lovers or friends who offer each other advice upon matters of love. Their relation in turn illuminates the situation of the narrator and his addressee (his friend or lover?) Aratus.[87]

The situation in the seventh *Idyll* is fundamentally different because there is an internal narrator, as Gutzwiller explains:

> Simichidas and Lycidas do not correspond to characters in the frame, whose likeness and difference define or mirror their own likeness and difference; the frame presents only the narrator, who suggests his oneness with the poet himself by placing himself in a recognizable time and place with companions and acquaintances who seem historical personages. Because of this suggested identification, the poet himself is implied in all the relationships of his autobiographical projection in the form of Simichidas. And so, as Simichidas is an analogue of Lycidas, the poet may be viewed as Lycidas' analogue as well. (Gutzwiller, 1991: 160)

[87] Cf. also Bowie (1996: 91–100).

This implies that, whereas Simichidas is indeed an analogue or alter ego of the poet, Lycidas is an alter ego once removed; an "alter alter ego." To clarify that the narrator is a fictional alter ego, not to be equated *tout court* with the poet, Theocritus, the narrator receives a different name: "Simichidas." The attested connotations of this name fit the character of the narrator, if "Simichidas" indeed derives from σιμός, snub-nosed, as the *scholia* assumed. This adjective came to mean "arch" or "pert," because of the character that was usually ascribed to people with flat noses.[88] Arch and pert would indeed appear to be adjectives that quite accurately describe the narrator's demeanor (e.g., 26–30; 37–42).[89]

To develop the possibility that Simichidas is presented *as a fiction* in the poem, it may be emphasized that the initially nameless internal narrator *receives* the name Simichidas from Lycidas (21). This act may indicate that he is, at some level, the creation of Lycidas. There is no explanation why Lycidas calls the narrator "Simichidas."[90] When the narrator eventually starts singing his song, he accepts the name by which Lycidas has accosted him but appears to keep it at a slight remove from himself (95–98). The beginning of Simichidas' song indeed poses some problems with regard to the question of its true authorship:[91]

> Σιμιχίδᾳ μὲν Ἔρωτες ἐπέπταρον· ἦ γὰρ ὁ δειλός
> τόσσον ἐρᾷ Μυρτοῦς ὅσον εἴαρος αἶγες ἔρανται.
> Ὤρατος δ' ὁ τὰ πάντα φιλαίτατος ἀνέρι τήνῳ
> παιδὸς ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοισιν ἔχει πόθον. οἶδεν Ἄριστις,
> ἐσθλὸς ἀνήρ, μέγ' ἄριστος, ὃν οὐδέ κεν αὐτὸς ἀείδειν
> Φοῖβος σὺν φόρμιγγι παρὰ τριπόδεσσι μεγαίροι,
> ὡς ἐκ παιδὸς Ἄρατος ὑπ' ὀστίον αἴθετ' ἔρωτι. (7.96–102)

> For Simichidas the Loves sneezed, for he, poor soul, loves Myrto as dearly as goats love the spring. But Aratus, dearest friend in all to me, guards deep at heart a desire of a boy. Aristis knows, a man of worth, the best of men, whom Phoebus himself would not grudge to stand and sing, lyre in hand, by his own tripods—knows how to the very marrow Aratus is aflame with love for the boy. (transl. Gow)

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[88] Cf. LSJ, who cite Mel. *AP* 5.176; *AP* 5.178.

[89] Cf. the remarks of Segal (1981: 167–176), and Ch. 2.5.1 and Ch. 5.4.

[90] Cf. Gow (1952: II, *ad* 11–14) and Hunter (1999: *ad* 11–14).

[91] Cf. *scholia* at 21a: οἱ δὲ ἕτερόν τινα τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ οὐ Θεόκριτον διὰ τὸ "Σιμιχίδᾳ μὲν Ἔρωτες ἐπέπταρον·" (96). (Some think ["Simichidas"] refers to another in his company, not to Theocritus, because of the phrase "The loves have sneezed for Simichidas"). However contrast *scholia* at 96–97c: περὶ ἑαυτοῦ ὁ ποιητὴς ᾄδων φησί· τῷ Σιμιχίδᾳ οἱ Ἔρωτες ἐπέπταρον. (Singing about himself, the poet says: etc.).

The oddness of this opening and the difficulty of deciding who the alleged speaker is have been remarked upon:

> The singer emphatically distances himself from the events he is describing. Whereas the singer of Lykidas' song unambiguously identifies himself as Lykidas (55),[92] Simichidas' song could be performed by another singer: μοι in 103 and 118 are inconclusive, and even τὸν ξεῖνον … μευ (119) does not necessarily pick up 98. Simichidas' song could be performed by others, whereas Lykidas' performance is wholly personal. (Hunter, 1999 *ad* 98)

I would like to suggest that the fact that the singer refers to himself so emphatically in the third person might moreover indicate that he is not completely at one with the identity of "Simichidas" as bestowed upon him by Lycidas. In other words, the first-person narrator points at the "fictional status" of Simichidas by his unwillingness to completely identify with him. He appears to make Simichidas simultaneously the singer and the subject of his song; or at least to create a (meaningful?) ambivalence as to the exact relation between Simichidas and the author of the song. Is it really the song of Simichidas? If so, what is the significance of the reference to Aristis (99)? Perhaps the song that follows is *really* a song in the voice of Aristis, just as Lycidas' song gives voice to the song of Tityrus.[93] The way in which Aristis is praised is remarkably similar to the way in which the narrator praises himself.[94] At any rate, what comes across is that the voices are strangely mixed up, and it is difficult to ascertain the ultimate authority behind the song.

The impression that Simichidas is in some way a "creation" of Lycidas seems to be confirmed by Lycidas' enigmatic remark to Simichidas that he is a πᾶν ἐπ' ἀλαθείᾳ πεπλασμένον ἐκ Διὸς ἔρνος (44, translated below). This expression, with its paradoxical opposition of ἀλαθείᾳ

[92] *Id.* 7.55–56: αἴ κα τὸν Λυκίδαν ὀπτεύμενον ἐξ Ἀφροδίτας / ῥύσηται· θερμὸς γὰρ ἔρως αὐτῶ με καταίθει. (If he saves Lycidas, who is roasted by Aphrodite; for a hot love for him burns me up).

[93] Cf. the commentary of Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*): "The most obvious inference from T.'s words would be that Aratus' love affair formed the subject of a poem by Aristis." Heubeck (1984: 233–243) proposed that the song eventually sang by the first person narrator is indeed the song of Aristis. Cf. also Hunter (1999: 180): "Like Lycidas, Simichidas' song experiments with different voices: 103 ff. may be taken as a recreation of the song of Aristis, or more probably as the voice of the poet [Aristis] himself."

[94] Praise of Aristis: *ἐσθλὸς* ἀνήρ, μέγ' *ἄριστος*, ὃν οὐδέ κεν αὐτὸς ἀείδειν / *Φοῖβος σὺν φόρμιγγι παρὰ τριπόδεσσι* μεγαίροι. (98–99) resembles self-praise of the narrator: καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ Μοισᾶν καπυρὸν στόμα, κἠμὲ λέγοντι / πάντες *ἀοιδὸν ἄριστον*. (Indeed, for I too am a clear voice of the Muses and all call me the best singer, 37–38); and of his art: *ἐσθλά*, τά που καὶ *Ζηνὸς ἐπὶ θρόνον* ἄγαγε φάμα. (Wonderful things, that, I think, have brought my fame even to Zeus' throne, 92).

(truth) and πεπλασμένον[95] (made up, fashioned, fictioned) has repeatedly caught the attention of scholars, who have generally proposed to translate it as, "you are a sapling of Zeus all fictioned for truth," meaning, "you are a convincing fiction, a poetic creation that is true to life." As Gutzwiller explains:

> Understood so, the phrase has reference not simply to the truthfulness of Simichidas' preceding statement, but also to his truthfulness as a poet, his ability to compose with verisimilitude, or even of his truthfulness as a poetic fiction, his believability as the poetic creation of the narrator.[96]
>
> (Gutzwiller, 1991: 166)

So, Simichidas may be considered a convincing creation of Theocritus. To complicate matters further, it must be stressed again that he may in some sense also be a "creation" of Lycidas, who of course ultimately is the creation of the narrator/Simichidas, too, as the narrator controls the narrative of his meeting with Lycidas. But there are also other indications in the text that Lycidas may be a creation of Simichidas. This seems, for instance, to be suggested by the phrase ἐσθλὸν σὺν Μοίσαισι Κυδωνικὸν εὕρομες ἄνδρα. (13: we found, with the Muses, a good man of Cydonia). The ambiguous and remarkable expression σὺν Μοίσαισι … εὕρομες might easily be construed as meaning, "we invented," or "created with the help of the Muses," that is to say, "we composed a poem about this man, we invented him."[97]

In turn, this might explain the mysterious and much debated emphasis on Lycidas' "extreme likeness" to a goatherd in one line although he is explicitly called an actual goatherd in the following lines.[98] The

[95] Cf. LSJ *s.v.* πλάσσω: "a distinctly literary term, expressing a figment, or fiction of the imagination of a poet," cf. e.g. Xenophan. fr. 1.22–23 DK: οὔτι μάχας διέπων Τιτήνων οὐδὲ Γιγάντων / οὐδέ ⟨τε⟩ Κενταύρων, *πλάσματα* τῶν προτέρων. (Not recounting the battles of the Titans or the Giants or the Centaurs, those fictions of earlier men.) and Pl. *Tim.* 264e4–5.

[96] Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*): "the phrase has been suspected, and if taken at its face value is certainly odd." For a meta-poetic interpretation, see e.g. Walsh (1985: 19), Segal (1981: 170–171), Goldhill (1991: 232), Hunter (1999 *ad loc.*).

[97] For εὑρίσκω meaning to "compose a song" cf. e.g. Hedyl. (Ath. 11.473a/GP V). It would usually seem to carry a hint of "invention of a formerly non-existent type of poetry" (cf. the expression *protos heuretes*). None of the scholarship I have been able to see has this interpretation, the general trend being merely to explain the phrase as meaning "we fell in by the good grace of the Muses" (i.e., pointing forward to the fact that the meeting would result in a musical exchange), cf. e.g. Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*), Goldhill (1991: 228), Hunter (1999 *ad loc.*).

[98] *Id.* 7.14–15: οὔνομα μὲν Λυκίδαν, ἦς δ' αἰπόλος, οὐδέ κέ τίς νιν / ἠγνοίησεν ἰδών, ἐπεὶ αἰπόλῳ ἔξοχ' ἐῴκει. (His name was Lycidas, and he was a goatherd. Nor could you

underlying significance of the expression is perhaps rather that Lycidas is an extremely realistic creation of poetry, the perfect quintessence of the bucolic herdsman poet, a goatherd who "looks exceptionally like a goatherd." Just as Simichidas is "fictioned for truth," Lycidas is a character that resembles greatly what he is; he too is a convincing fiction.

The interpretation that either singer in the poem appears to be portrayed as the creator and fiction of the other, or at least remarking upon the fictional status of the other, is supported by the observation that both sing songs in which other (bucolic) singers feature. These singers, caught in a poetic fiction, are also *creators* of singers in their songs. All this ties very well into the tangled web of echoes, analogies, and allusions that Theocritus spins in all of his bucolic *Idylls*, as argued in Chapter 3.12. As bucolic poetry is poetry by singing herdsmen about singing herdsmen, it is unsurprising that the poet Theocritus creates a poetic alter ego who simultaneously functions as the creator of his antagonist (the singing herdsman Lycidas) and as the fiction of this singing herdsman ("Simichidas") in this poem. In a programmatic poem about the nature of bucolic poetry, such *mise en abyme* serves to illustrate the Chinese-box-like structure characteristic of Theocritus' bucolic poetry.

Lycidas' song illustrates this. It tells of a symposium at which a herdsman-singer, Tityrus, will sing of the singing *protoi heuretai* of bucolic poetry: Daphnis and Comatas, the cowherd and the goatherd who repeatedly feature in the poems of Theocritus and of his herdsman-characters.[99] The song of Lycidas typifies the way in which songs are embedded in other songs, making different levels of song practically indistinguishable.

fail to recognize him as such, since he looked exceedingly like a goatherd). This expression has been the starting point of the whole debate on the identity of Lycidas. For a discussion of some of the older theories, cf. e.g. Gow (1952: II, 128–129): ἔξοχ' ἐῴκει: "If pressed here, it would probably lend a little colour to the view that Lycidas is not a goatherd at all." The formula is very similar to the ones used to introduce gods in human form in the Homeric epics, cf. Puelma (1960: 144–164); Cameron (1963: 291–307); Hunter (1999: 146–150). On the remarkably opaque phrasing, see Goldhill (1991: 228–229): "A doubt is introduced? Yet precisely what is not provided is adequate, clear information to move beyond that doubt."

[99] Daphnis is the hero in the song of Thyrsis in *Id.* 1 (as he is here), and is mentioned in the mimetic *Id.* 5 (a short reference by Comatas). In the partly mimetic *Id.* 6, he is a speaking character introduced by the narrator. A (different?) Comatas figures as a singer in *Id.* 5; cf. Ch. 3.11.

αὐλησεῦντι δέ μοι δύο ποιμένες, εἷς μὲν Ἀχαρνεύς,
εἷς δὲ Λυκωπίτας· ὁ δὲ Τίτυρος ἐγγύθεν ᾀσεῖ
ὥς ποκα τᾶς Ξενέας ἠράσσατο Δάφνις ὁ βούτας,
χὠς ὄρος ἀμφεπονεῖτο καὶ ὡς δρύες αὐτὸν ἐθρήνευν
Ἱμέρα αἵτε φύοντι παρ' ὄχθαισιν ποταμοῖο,
εὖτε χιὼν ὥς τις κατετάκετο μακρὸν ὑφ' Αἷμον
ἢ Ἄθω ἢ Ῥοδόπαν ἢ Καύκασον ἐσχατόωντα.
ᾀσεῖ δ' ὥς ποκ' ἔδεκτο τὸν αἰπόλον εὐρέα λάρναξ
ζωὸν ἐόντα κακαῖσιν ἀτασθαλίαισιν ἄνακτος,
ὥς τέ νιν αἱ σιμαὶ λειμωνόθε φέρβον ἰοῖσαι
κέδρον ἐς ἁδεῖαν μαλακοῖς ἄνθεσσι μέλισσαι,
οὕνεκά οἱ γλυκὺ Μοῖσα κατὰ στόματος χέε νέκταρ.
ὦ μακαριστὲ Κομᾶτα, τύ θην τάδε τερπνὰ πεπόνθεις·
καὶ τὺ κατεκλᾴσθης ἐς λάρνακα, καὶ τὺ μελισσᾶν
κηρία φερβόμενος ἔτος ὥριον ἐξεπόνασας.
αἴθ' ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ζωοῖς ἐναρίθμιος ὤφελες ἦμεν,
ὥς τοι ἐγὼν ἐνόμευον ἀν' ὤρεα τὰς καλὰς αἶγας
φωνᾶς εἰσαΐων, τὺ δ' ὑπὸ δρυσὶν ἢ ὑπὸ πεύκαις
ἁδὺ μελισδόμενος κατεκέκλισο, θεῖε Κομᾶτα. (7.70–89)

And two shepherds shall pipe to me, one from Acharnae, and from Lycope one, and close at hand Tityrus shall sing how once Daphnis the neatherd loved Xenea, and how the hill was sorrowful about him and the oak-trees which grow upon the river Himeras' banks sang his dirge, when he was wasting like any snow under high Haemus or Athos or Rhodope or remotest Caucasus. And he shall sing how once a wide coffer received the goatherd alive by the impious presumption of a king; and how the blunt-faced bees came from the meadows to the fragrant chest of cedar and fed him on tender flowers because the Muse had poured sweet nectar on his lips. Ah, blessed Comatas, yours is this sweet lot, you too were closed within the coffer; you too, on honeycomb fed, did endure with toil the springtime of the year. Would that you had been numbered among the living in my day, that I might have herded your fair goats upon the hills, and listened to your voice, while you, divine Comatas, did lie and made sweet music under the oaks or the pines. (transl. Gow, adapted)

At the end of the song, the legendary goatherd poet Comatas, who was kept alive inside a chest by the providence of the Muses, is suddenly addressed directly despite being long dead and featuring here in a song embedded in a song. Ultimately, this means that the voices of Theocritus (who gives a voice to his alter ego, "Simichidas") and "Simichidas" (who relates the song of Lycidas) and Lycidas (who sings of the song of Tityrus) and Tityrus (who refers to the singing mythical goatherd poet Comatas) converge.[100]

[100] This is similar to *Arg.* 2. 705–713, where the song of Orpheus, a hymn to Apollo

The passage is extremely convoluted in that the song of Lycidas is set in the future, addresses a legendary and already ancient poet, and is recalled by Simichidas as something he heard "once upon a time." Through this conflation of voices and time, Comatas is ultimately addressed by Theocritus himself, or by whoever is reciting the seventh *Idyll*. This is the miracle of bucolic poetry: the legendary goatherd singer Comatas, who is apparently at the heart of bucolic poetry, can be directly addressed and a song about his fate can resound across the ages because it has been handed down in the bucolic tradition, in songs by singing herdsmen about singing herdsmen; yet at the same time it seems invented at the moment of recital.

The unisonous address to Comatas, achieved through this harmony and the dizzying convergence of the voices of all the singers in all the layers of the poem makes clear that there is a fundamental unity to bucolic poetry. Although these voices operate on different levels of temporal and literary remoteness, and reality, myth, and fiction, they can also be considered a single entity. The voices easily cross these boundaries and thus symbolize both the remoteness of the origins of bucolic poetry (Ἦς χρόνος ἁνίκ', once upon a time, 1) and its direct accessibility. Bucolic song simultaneously stresses the distance and elusiveness of its past and brings that past, through performance, directly to life.

Up to a certain point, this also applies to the song of Simichidas. Simichidas sings about his friend Aratus' love for a certain Philinus. It seems likely that this Aratus is the same Aratus addressed in the frame of *Idyll* 6. It is not certain that he is the author of the *Phaenomena*; but if he were, the structural similarity of the songs of Simichidas and Lycidas would be even greater.[101] Lycidas sings of Tityrus, who sings of Daphnis

narrated by the narrator in reported speech, is suddenly interrupted by a direct apostrophe of the god. The question who is speaking arises, Orpheus or the narrator. In last instance, it seems unanswerable, the implied point presumably being that there is a convergence between the voices of Orpheus and the narrator, cf. Ch. 3.5.

[101] The *scholia* (*Arg. ad Id.* 6) suggest identifying him as the poet from Soloi: δύναται δὲ οὗτος εἶναι ὁ τὰ Φαινόμενα γράψας· συγκεχρόνικε γὰρ τῷ Θεοκρίτῳ καὶ εἰκὸς ⟨φίλους⟩ ἀλλήλων γενέσθαι. (It is possible that this is the one who wrote the *Phaenomena*, for he was a contemporary of Theocritus and it is likely that they were friends). This identification was first questioned by Wilamowitz (1894: 182). For arguments *pro* and *contra* the identification with the author of the *Phaenomena*, see Hubbard (1998: 27), Cautadella (1967: 264–281); (1969: 365–379) (*pro*); Gow (1952: II, 118–119) and Hunter (1999: 243) (*contra*). The structural similarity of the songs could indeed argue in favor of identification with Aratus *the poet*. For some remarkable Aratean echoes in Theocritus, which might serve to strengthen this thesis, cf. Pendergraft (1986: 47–54).

and Comatas, who is finally apostrophized. Just so "Simichidas" apparently sings of Aristis who sings of (the poet) Aratus. Aratus is eventually apostrophized as well. Lycidas, a fiction of "Simichidas" and Theocritus, sings of the *fictional* herdsmen in Theocritus' poetry; "Simichidas," Theocritus' fictional alter ego, addresses Aratus who is also addressed by the poet Theocritus (*Id*. 6, 13). The internal narrator of the seventh *Idyll* is linked more closely to the realistic frame of Theocritus' poetry than Lycidas and is therefore able to refer to actual contemporaries of Theocritus (Asclepiades and Philitas, Aratus, possibly Antigenes and Phrasidamos). Nonetheless, he too is a fiction, as his name, given to him by the fictional goatherd Lycidas, indicates.

6.7. *Conclusion*

The Hellenistic poets' awareness of their own position as readers of texts of the past influenced their perception of their own task as creators of texts that would become a de-contextualized text of the past to future readers. Absence of independent historical information caused Hellenistic poets to read the poetry of their predecessors in a biographical way. This was commonly accepted as the best way of gaining knowledge about their character, life, and morals, as literary epitaphs demonstrate: Archilochus was violent, Anacreon drunk, and so on (cf. Ch. 1.5.2). This being the case, they must have been doubly conscious that they could partly determine how their own personalities would be reconstructed from their poetry.

The evident means to influence readers beyond the grave was found in the writing of self-epitaphs and other *sphragides*. In these, a poet like Posidippus characterizes himself and offers his readers a key to his poetry and persona. He clearly reveals his awareness of the lasting quality of his own memorial by alluding to the living fame that was the contemporary tribute to predecessors like Archilochus.

Reading poetry of the past without a context could also swing the other way and lead to ambiguity, interpretational problems, and the awareness that a first-person statement need not necessarily be identical to the voice of a poem's author. This awareness also finds expression in Hellenistic poetry, notably in Callimachus' sophisticated mimetic *Hymns*, which create the illusion of lost performances for readers. Callimachus crafted this illusion by inserting deictic references to absent people and distant (or unreal?) locations, leaving his readers to guess at the relation between

the speaking voice and the author. Paradoxically, this complicated practice also implies the wishes to be read and interpreted and to enter the literary tradition.

Moreover, a name might harbor unexpected but relevant meanings intended to be decoded by the reader or interpreter of a work of poetry. To encourage such interpretations, the name could be contextualized to suggest meaning and evoke significances and similarities that would have otherwise gone unnoticed. Examples of this meaning-laden embedding include the scurrilous epigram by Crates (*AP* 11.218), the two epigrams of Callimachus on himself and his father (*AP* 7.525; 7.415), and the signatures of Aratus and Apollonius in the opening lines to their works.

The case of Theocritus/"Simichidas" is different in that it does not so much depend on correct interpretation of the connotations of the name *per se*, but rather on the perception that "Simichidas" is a name given by Lycidas, a character in a poem, to the first-person narrator of that poem, an indication that this narrator is a poetic fiction. Once the fictionality of the narrator/Simichidas is recognized, his fictional status becomes the key to the interpretation of all that happens in the programmatic seventh *Idyll*. This fictional status points to the creative role of Lycidas, who paradoxically is himself a creation of the internal narrator of the *Idyll*. Both are figments of the imagination of the other, and of the poet Theocritus; and the latter reinforces this by pointing to the fictionality of his creations in various ways (12; 44). The dual status of both Lycidas and Simichidas as poetic fictions and poets is a comment upon the character of bucolic poetry, a poetry of (fictional) herdsmen poets about herdsmen poets, singing of herdsmen poets, all created by Theocritus.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AUTHORITY AND INSPIRATION IN THE AGE OF THE MUSEUM

7.1. *Questioning the Muse*

In an age that differed greatly from the times when Homer sang of the Trojan War and Pindar praised the victors of athletic games, pervasive and undying *topoi* such as invocations of the Muses and κλέος as poetry's main *raison d'être* needed to be interpreted anew if they were to remain relevant.[1] How was a poet to account for his knowledge of things past if the Muse had, with the waning of orality, become a convention, perhaps even a figure of speech?[2] Was the Muse still relevant? The inspiration she provided had been questioned in Plato's attacks on poetry, which denied any truth or educational value to utterances of poets, who, according to this philosopher, were in a state of irrational *enthousiasmos* when composing their works.[3] Their poetry, then, could hardly contain anything that might withstand the test of the intellect. To rethink the implications of the Muse and the inspiration she provided therefore meant to question both the function of poetry as a receptacle of collective memory, and the doctrine of divine inspiration.

In Homer's *Iliad*, the Muses owed their omniscience to their eternal omnipresence, which granted them knowledge of all that had happened in the past through eye-sight as opposed to hearsay (κλέος), the only source of knowledge available to humans:

> ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα,
> ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν … (*Il.* 2.485–486)

[1] For an overview of the development of the concept of κλέος, see Steinkopf (1937), Greindl (1938).

[2] For an analysis of the decline of the Muses' importance, see Häussler (1973: 117–145); Spentzou (2002: 1–28), with bibliography. For an overview of Muse invocations in ancient literature in general, see Falter (1934). A collection of stimulating essays on the topic is Spentzou-Fowler (2002).

[3] On Plato's opinions on poetry (especially in *Ion* and *Resp.*), see Murray (1981), Else (1986).

> For you are goddesses and are present and know everything, while we know nothing but hear only rumors …

According to this belief, the cooperation of the Muses enabled a poet to convey an impression of almost visual directness to his audience.[4] The listeners were made to feel as if they had been present, or at any rate the poet, at the events he was narrating. In a sense, poetry thus made the past present through divine intervention.[5]

By the Hellenistic age, when written literature, scholarly prose as well as poetry, about people and things long gone was securely stored (but retrievable for those who knew their way about the Museum), poetry about the past produced by fellows of the Museum necessarily acquired a new character and function. A striking and well known example of how the changed attitude *vis à vis* the past altered the perception of the Muses may be found in Callimachus' *Aetia* (fr. 75 Pf. 75–76. *Acontius and Cydippe*). The narrator here states that the history of the isle of Ceos, of which the love story of Acontius and Cydippe forms a part, derives from the writings of Xenomedes, "an old man concerned with truth," (πρέσβυς ἐτητυμίῃ μεμελημένος) who "once stored the whole history of the isle in his mythological chronicles" (ὅς ποτε πᾶσαν / νῆσον ἐνὶ μνήμῃ κάτθετο μυθολόγῳ). In itself, such a statement would remind a reader rather of a historian than of a poet. However, the most surprising turn is yet to come, for the narrator continues: "And from thence, the story of the boy swiftly made its way to my Calliope" (ἔ̣ν̣θεν ὁ π̣α̣[ι]δ̣ός / μῦθος ἐς ἡμετέρην ἔδραμε Καλλιόπην).[6] If the story was set down in Xenomedes' chronicles before it reached Calliope, this implies that she is presented as a learned lady who does not gain her omniscience from omnipresence

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[4] The root *ιδ- in ἴστε and ἴδμεν is related to eyesight, whereas κλέος is related to verbs of hearing (κλύω). See on this passage De Jong (1987: 45–52). Cf. Latacz (2000: *ad Il.* 2.485–486): "*Menschliches und Göttliches Wissen unterscheiden sich nicht voneinander durch die Richtigkeit des Inhalts (…) unterschiedlich ist lediglich die Grad der Genauigkeit und Zuverlässigkeit.*"

[5] Cf. *Od.* 8.487–491, Odysseus' compliment to Demodocus: Δημόδοκ', ἔξοχα δή σε βροτῶν αἰνίζομ' ἁπάντων. / ἢ σέ γε Μοῦσ' ἐδίδαξε, Διὸς πάϊς, ἢ σέ γ' Ἀπόλλων· / λίην γὰρ κατὰ κόσμον Ἀχαιῶν οἶτον ἀείδεις, / ὅσσ' ἔρξαν τ' ἔπαθόν τε καὶ ὅσσ' ἐμόγησαν Ἀχαιοί, / ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας. (Demodocus, I praise you above all men, whether it was the Muse, the daughter of Zeus, that taught you, or Apollo; for well and truly do you sing of the fate of the Achaeans, all that they did and suffered, and all the toils they endured, as though you had been present, or had heard the tale from another).

[6] On Callimachus' unusual relation with the Muses in *Aetia* books 1 and 2, see Harder (1988: 1–15).

but rather from the diligent study of ancient texts. Thus, the passage expresses that Callimachus turns stories found in ancient documents into fiction (poetry). It is clear how far he has wandered from the Homeric invocations of *Iliad* 2. Both poets make a claim to knowledge about the past by relying on the Muse, but whereas Homer's Muse is simply and unquestionably omniscient on account of her divine nature, Callimachus' Muse is reliable because she chooses her sources well. Would Plato's qualms as to the untrustworthiness of irrational inspiration still apply to a Muse who gains her knowledge from a conscientious chronicler?

Callimachus' description of the way the Muse gathers her knowledge presumably forms an accurate portrayal of the way many of the *poetae docti* of the Library or Museum in reality proceeded: they found their material in prose treatises. The versification of such learned prose works became popular in Hellenistic poetry, as can be seen from the vogue of didactic poems: Aratus' *Phaenomena*, largely a poetic adaptation of Eudoxus' treatise of this title, Eratosthenes' *Hermes*, with its many geographical excursus, and the *Alexipharmaca* and *Theriaca* of Nicander, which probably draw heavily on the works of the Alexandrian iologist Numenius.[7] A final example of a somewhat different nature may be found in the epic *Argonautica* of Apollonius. Throughout this narrative, learned excursions on recondite aetiological and geographical facts breathe the atmosphere of the library, as is confirmed by the many references to Apollonius' possible sources in the *scholia* to his epic.[8] On the level of vocabulary, the learned and "unspontaneous" content of Hellenistic poetry was matched by a *recherché* employment of rare and archaic words, as shall presently be explored in more detail.

In the field of encomiastic poetry, problems—albeit of a different nature—also arose. Poets saw themselves in the entirely new position of having to praise kings like the Ptolemies who had reserved the prerogatives of (semi-)divinity for themselves and their dynasties.[9] What was more, panegyric poetry had to compete with epideictic prose orations,

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[7] Nicander, who is probably later than Callimachus and Aratus, cf. Gow and Scholfield (1997 [1953]: 5–8), does not even bother to invoke the Muses; for him the fact that poetry draws on prose or other written sources has apparently become completely acceptable.

[8] On Apollonius' sources see e.g. Stössl (1941).

[9] Weber (1993) treats the relation of court and poets extensively, but pays little attention to this potential problem. Hunter (2003) discusses the panegyric and the implications of divine rulership in Theoc. *Id.* 17 in detail.

royal pageants,[10] and even temples and sacrifice in honor of the monarch. Could a poet in such surroundings still capitalize on his privileged role, his own particular brand of divinity, and claim to be a mouthpiece of the Muse? At any rate, caution was needed in this new situation, and the two kinds of divinity, poetic and royal, had to sound in unison.[11]

In coming to terms with such issues, Hellenistic poets looked, once more, to the poetry of the past. They found ways to reinterpret what they encountered in the literary heritage. The ensuing aims to illustrate this by discussing an example of a philological approach to the past in poetry. I examine how the Hellenistic glossographical and interpretative-critical interest in Homer gave rise to a creative re-fashioning of the figure of the poet by Apollonius and Theocritus. My discussion of Apollonius' use of the word will find itself substantially in agreement with the findings of José González's (2000: 270–292) although his argument will be furthered in Apollonius' case and expanded to that of Theocritus, whom he only mentions in passing.

7.2. *Homeric Scholarship and Hellenistic Poetry*

With regard to Hellenistic scholarship on Homer, Antonios Rengakos states, "the rise of Homeric scholarship as an academic discipline coincides with the heyday of Hellenistic poetry. (...) This is no pure accident, but an essential relationship" (2001: 193).[12] This applies to most major Hellenistic poets; in the case of Apollonius, one scholar even stated, "The *Argonautica* itself is a work of scholarship on Homer,"[13] and another claimed it was "a kind of poetic dictionary to Homer."[14] Much in it can indeed be read as a commentary on Homeric poetry and contemporary

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[10] E.g. the impressive and lavish parade organized by Ptolemy Philadelphus described by Callixeinus (Ath. 5= *FHG*3), on which see Rice (1983).

[11] This is suggested by the alleged fate of the satirical poet Sotades who attacked the holy brother-sister marriage of the Ptolemies with obscene verse addressed to Ptolemy Philadelphus: Εἰς οὐχ ὁσίην τρυμαλιὴν τὸ κέντρον ὠθεῖς (you are shoving your prick into an unholy hole, fr. 1 Powell). Anecdote has it that this caused the latter to have Sotades shut into a leaden chest and thrown into the sea to drown.

[12] Cf. Pfeiffer (1968: 89), Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 23–26).

[13] Knight (1995: 39).

[14] Rengakos (2001: 194). On the nature of Hellenistic critical scholarship on Homer, see further Pfeiffer (1968), Porter (1992: 67–114), Schmidt (1997: 1–12) and Van Thiel (1997: 13–37).

Homeric scholarship.[15] Passages in the *Argonautica* make implicit comments on the alleged meaning of rare Homeric words, demonstrating through their context how Apollonius (dis)agreed with the interpretations offered by previous and contemporary scholars.[16] He was also concerned with verb- and noun-formation on the basis of incomplete Homeric paradigms. This is not coincidental: Apollonius himself wrote a scholarly work on Homer, entitled πρὸς Ζηνόδοτον, in which he apparently attacked the critical recension of Homer by Zenodotus, his predecessor as head librarian of the Alexandrian Library.[17] Theocritus, the other poet to be discussed here, was not a scholar connected to the Museum, yet his works too demonstrate "an unrelenting and often learned engagement with (...) in particular the Homeric epics ..."[18]

It is not surprising, then, to find that Apollonius and Theocritus both seized on a Homeric *hapax legomenon* to express a crucial notion about their poetry.[19] The word in question is ὑποφήτης (*Il.* 16.235),[20] which is varied by Apollonius in the *Argonautica* in the form ὑποφήτωρ.[21] The significance and connotations of these rare words, which qualify poets (in Theocritus *Id.* 16.29; 17.115; 22.116) and inspirational deities (in Apollonius *Arg.* 1.4) will be analyzed, demonstrating how these poets view divine inspiration. The preoccupation with Homer, Homeric scholarship,

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15 See Rengakos (1993); (1994); (2001: 193–217). Fantuzzi (1988) has calculated that Apollonius uses 102 Homeric *hapax legomena* not attested since Homer. Of these, he uses 65 in the same metrical position as Homer. For an idea of the extent of Apollonius' occupation with Homeric vocabulary, one can also look at the overwhelming amount of Apollonian Homerisms gathered by Campbell (1981).

16 Cf. Kyriakou (1995: 3–4); Rengakos (1993 and 2001: 193–216) provides many examples.

17 Rengakos (2001: 206–209).

18 Thus e.g. Sens (1997: 36). Theocritus' familiarity with Homer is widely agreed upon by scholars from Gow (1952) to Hunter (1999).

19 On the importance of *hapax legomena* for the development of Homeric scholarship in general, see Keil (1998).

20 The only other instances of variants of ὑποφήτης or ὑποφητεία between Homer and the Hellenistic age are: Pi. *P.* 2.76: ἄμαχον κακὸν ἀμφοτέροις διαβολιᾶν ὑποφάτιες. (a irremedial evil is the mutual transmission of slander); Hyp. fr. 178.7: τὴν ὑποφῆτιν καὶ ζάκορον Ἀφροδίτης (the prophet and attendant of Aphrodite).

21 Other attestations of this noun (probably all later): Eus. *P. E.* 5.8.7.6 (fourth cent. CE) quoting Porph. *De philosophia ex oraculis haurienda* 158.7 (third cent. CE); Nonn. *Paraphrasis Sancti Evangelii Iohannis* 5.157 (fifth cent. CE); *AP* 14.1 (hard to date, but in all likelihood Hellenistic or later); Ps. Man. *Apotelesmatica* 2.295 and 3.326 (third-fourth cent. CE); P. Oxy 7.1015 (*Encomium Theonis Gymnasiarchi*, third cent. CE); P. Berol. 10559A et B (fourth cent. CE); a quotation of *Arg.* 1.20–22 in the *Scholia ad Dionysii Periegetae Orbis Descriptionem*. Cf. Clauss (1993: 17, n. 13), González (2000: 270).

and Homeric vocabulary makes it likely that *hapax legomena* would stand out for learned readers and convey a message best understood against the backdrop of the original passage from which it was taken and the scholarly debate about its interpretation.

7.3. *Overview of Passages Featuring ὑποφήτης*

To provide a background against which to interpret the passages in Apollonius and Theocritus, this section discusses the Homeric passage from which the *hapax* derives and lists and analyzes all Hellenistic passages in which the word ὑποφήτης subsequently occurs.

Homer, *Iliad* 16.233–238

Il. 16.233–238 contains Achilles' prayer to Zeus before Patroclus goes into battle wearing his friend's armor. Achilles introduces his prayer with the following hymn-like invocation:

> Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε Πελασγικὲ τηλόθι ναίων
> Δωδώνης μεδέων δυσχειμέρου, ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ
> σοὶ ναίουσ' ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι,
> ἠμὲν δή ποτ' ἐμὸν ἔπος ἔκλυες εὐξαμένοιο,
> τίμησας μὲν ἐμέ, μέγα δ' ἴψαο λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν,
> ἠδ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν μοι τόδ' ἐπικρήηνον ἐέλδωρ· (16.233–238)

> Lord Zeus, Dodonian, Pelasgian, you who live far away, ruler of stormy Dodona, around you live the Selloi, your ὑποφῆται with feet unwashed, who sleep on the ground; you have once heard my words in prayer—when you honored me and greatly harmed the army of the Achaeans—so now also grant this wish of mine …

Achilles prays that Patroclus may avert battle from the Greeks ships and return alive and well from the fray. As the narrator remarks, Zeus hears (ἔκλυε, 249) Achilles, which initially creates the impression that the prayer will be granted.[22] But Zeus grants only the first part of it, saving the Greek ships; he denies Patroclus a safe return:

> Ὣς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε μητίετα Ζεύς.
> τῷ δ' ἕτερον μὲν ἔδωκε πατήρ, ἕτερον δ' ἀνένευσε … (16.249–250)

> So he spoke, in prayer, and Zeus of wise counsel heard him. And to him the father granted one thing, but the other he denied …

[22] Cf. Janko (1985: *ad loc.*).

The passage illustrates how unfathomable the designs and motivations of the gods may be for humans and how futile human wishes in relation to divine power. The reference to the *Selloi*, priests of the oracle of Dodona and intermediaries who explain the will of Zeus from the sounds of speaking oaks, serves to emphasize this mysterious distance between humans and gods: the word ὑποφῆται may here be translated as "interpreters/revelators/transmitters (of an oracle or divine will/plan)."[23] The word is practically synonymous with προφήτης,[24] as the explanation of the D-scholia *ad loc.* confirms:[25]

> Ὑπομάντεις ἱερεῖς. Ὅ ἐστι, χρησμῳδοί, θεολόγοι, προφῆται. Ὑποφήτας γὰρ λέγουσι τοὺς περὶ τὰ χρηστήρια ἀσχολουμένους καὶ τὰς μαντείας τὰς γιγνομένας ὑπὸ τῶν ἱερέων ἐκφέροντας. (Erbse, 1975)

> Priests, who divine the meaning of an oracle. That is, oraclemongers, diviners, prophets. For they call ὑποφῆται those who occupy themselves with the oracles and bring out the oracular sayings that have been given by the priests.

The ὑποφῆται are subordinate to the priests (ἱερεῖς) who "deliver" the oracular sayings; they are interpreters and expounders of the oracle after the priests have received it from the gods (cf. ὑπομάντεις). This implies a hierarchy: Zeus (speaking through the oak)—priests (ἱερεῖς, who produce the oracular response)—ὑποφῆται (who publish and interpret this response)—public. This would seem to echo the practice as it was at Delphi, where the hierarchy (at least in the classical age) was Apollo—Pythia—προφῆται—public.[26]

Aratus, *Phaenomena* 163–164

There were many stories about the birth of Zeus and his subsequent upbringing, either by a goat or nymph called Amalthea or by both.[27]

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[23] On the oracle at Dodona, see in general *DNP s.v. Dodona* and Parke (1967a and b). The consultation of the oak was no longer in use in the Hellenistic age.

[24] *DNP s.v. prophetes*: "*wörtlich: Sprecher(in) (einer Gottheit). Er/sie deutet oder verkündet den Willen der Götter (...) Prophetai sind dann (...) Menschen, die durch Audition, Vision, Traum o.ä. Offenbarungen einer Gottheit empfangen und von ihr beauftragt werden, diese Kunde anderen mitzuteilen.*"

[25] Cf. González (2000: 277).

[26] Cf. McLeod (1961: 317–325), Parke (1965), Fontenrose (1978), although terminology expressing the functions could vary. It may be that the *scholia's* explanation is based on analogy with Delphic practice as known from the classical era.

[27] The story that Zeus was nursed by a goat was perhaps taken from the Cretan poet-

Aratus claims here that Zeus was brought up by a goat that was catasterized as the star *Capella*. This is endorsed by his assertion that the name "Olenian Goat" was given by the ὑποφῆται of Zeus:

> Αἲξ ἱερή, τὴν μέν τε λόγος Διὶ μαζὸν ἐπισχεῖν·
> Ὠλενίην δέ μιν Αἶγα Διὸς καλέους' ὑποφῆται. (163–164)

> The sacred Goat, who is said to have tendered her breast to Zeus: the ὑποφῆται of Zeus call her the Olenian Goat. (transl. Kidd)

In Aratus' view of the cosmos, there is a divinely given name name that describes which catasterism the constellation symbolizes and hence provides significance to each constellation.[28] Inquiry into the names of these cosmic phenomena constitutes an interpretative effort as to the divine plan directing the cosmos. This explains why ὑποφῆται are brought in to endorse the name "Olenian Goat." They are privy to knowledge of how the universe works through Zeus' plan and able to explain this to humankind.

Apollonius, *Argonautica* 1.1310–1320

In *Arg.* 1.1280–1283, the Argonauts find that, after a stop at Mysia, they have set sail again without bringing Heracles and Polyphemus. A dispute breaks out among them: should they return or continue without their shipmates? In the middle of discord, Glaucus, the son of the seagod Nereus, suddenly rises up out of the water and stops them from turning back:

> τοῖσιν δὲ Γλαῦκος βρυχίης ἁλὸς ἐξεφαάνθη,
> Νηρῆος θείοιο πολυφράδμων ὑποφήτης·
>
> (…) καὶ ἴαχεν ἐσσυμένοισιν·
> "Τίπτε παρὲκ μεγάλοιο Διὸς μενεαίνετε βουλὴν
> Αἰήτεω πτολίεθρον ἄγειν θρασὺν Ἡρακλῆα;
> Ἄργεΐ οἱ μοῖρ' ἐστὶν ἀτασθάλῳ Εὐρυσθῆι

philosopher-historian Epimenides (sixth cent. BCE), cf. Kidd (1997: 242) and DK fr. 21; Str. 8.7.5 claims that there was a nymph named Amalthea who possessed a goat which nurtured Zeus, cf. Hyg. 2.13.14. Call. *Hymn* I, 48–49 names the goat Amalthea.

[28] There seem to be Stoic overtones to this belief, cf. Martin (1967) on *Phaen.* 1–18. One could compare the openly Stoic Zeus of Aratus' contemporary Cleanthes in his *Hymn to Zeus*, line 2: Ζεῦ φύσεως ἀρχηγέ, νόμου μετὰ πάντα κυβερνῶν … (Zeus, ruler of nature, you who steer all with your law …). On the Stoic influences on Aratus' view of the cosmos, see further Erren (1967), Effe (1977). Their view has been nuanced by Kenney (1979). It is still a debated issue.

ἐκπλῆσαι μογέοντα δυώδεκα πάντας ἀέθλους,
ναίειν δ' ἀθανάτοισι συνέστιον, εἴ κ' ἔτι παύρους
ἐξανύσῃ· τῷ μή τι ποθὴ κείνοιο πελέσθω." (1.1310–1320)

But to them out of the salty depths appeared Glaucus, the wise interpreter of divine Nereus. Raising up his shaggy head and chest down to his waist, he seized the ship's keel in his mighty hand and shouted to the men in their haste: "Why in opposition to the plan of great Zeus are you determined to take bold Heracles to Aeetes' city? At Argos it is his destiny to toil for arrogant Eurysteus and accomplish twelve labours in all, and to dwell in the home of the immortals if he completes a few more. Therefore let there be no remorse for him." (transl. Race)

Here too a ὑποφήτης clearly possesses privileged knowledge regarding the will of Zeus (1.1315).[29] Unlike in the two previous passages, however, the mediator between humans and Zeus is a divinity himself. Moreover, Glaucus is not directly a ὑποφήτης of *Zeus*, but rather of Nereus, the marine deity.[30] The information concerning the fate of Heracles comes to the Argonauts from Zeus, via Nereus and Glaucus.[31] This complex way of relaying knowledge about the divine plan is typical for the difficult communication between humans and gods in the *Argonautica*.[32] At the same time, the hierarchical structure implied here is reminiscent of the hierarchy in the *D-scholia* glossing the word ὑποφήτης.

A ὑποφήτης, then, is a revelatory prophet subordinate to a divine authority in all of the discussed passages. He may be human (*Il.* 16.235; *Phaen.* 164) or divine (*Arg.* 1.1311).

7.4. *The Μοῦσαι ὑποφήτορες of Apollonius*

It is now time to address a highly challenging text, namely the passage at the end of the proem of Apollonius' *Argonautica* 1:

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[29] Cf. Feeney (1991: 71).

[30] Nereus was traditionally known, though not explicitly so in the *Argonautica*, for his prophetic powers. The fact that Hesiod calls him ἀψευδέα καὶ ἀληθέα and νημερτής τε καὶ ἤπιος (*Theog.* 233–264) may reflect this belief. In general, all sea- and river divinities were believed to possess prophetic powers.

[31] At Soph. *Trach.* 1166, Heracles relates how he has received a prophecy very similar to the one in *Arg.* 1.1317–1320 at Dodona, in the wood of the Selloi. This would appear to be a relevant subtext connecting the passage in Apollonius to the one in *Il.* 16.235.

[32] On the gods in the *Argonautica*, see e.g. Klein (1931: 18–51; 215–257), Faerber (1932: 81–82), Feeney (1991: 69–95), Hunter (1993: 77–92), Knight (1995: 267–287). The ignorance and ἀμηχανίη of humans regarding the will of the gods pervade the epic.

Νῆα μὲν οὖν οἱ πρόσθεν ἔτι κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί
Ἄργον Ἀθηναίης καμέειν ὑποθημοσύνῃσι·
νῦν δ' ἂν ἐγὼ γενεήν τε καὶ οὔνομα μυθησαίμην
ἡρώων, δολιχῆς τε πόρους ἁλός, ὅσσα τ' ἔρεξαν
πλαζόμενοι· Μοῦσαι δ' ὑποφήτορες εἶεν ἀοιδῆς. (*Arg.* 1.18–22)

As for the ship, the songs of former bards still tell how Argus built it according to Athena's instructions. But now I wish to relate the lineage and names of the heroes, their journeys on the vast sea and all they did as they wandered; let the Muses be the ὑποφήτορες of my song.
(transl. Race 2008, adapted)

Because of the occurrence of the hapax ὑποφήτορες, this passage has long been a scholarly conundrum defying convincing interpretation.[33] The word is not attested before Apollonius and only very rarely afterwards. It would seem, therefore, that he has coined it himself as a variant of ὑποφήτης.[34] Starting out from LSJ's explanation of the word, "suggester, interpreter, expounder esp. of divine will or judgment," the term has been interpreted in either one of two ways: "suggester" (i.e., *de facto*: inspirer) or "interpreter." In the context of the Apollonian passage, this leads to the respective interpretations "inspirers of my song,"[35] which sounds very traditional, or "interpreters of my song,"[36] which sounds very unusual, since it is usually held to imply that Apollonius puts himself *above* the Muse: Apollonius sings the song while the Muses interpret it for the audience. This second translation would imply a revolutionary, unique way of presenting the relationship between poet and Muse. The

[33] E.g. *TLG Stephanus* (1829) *s.v.*, Gercke (1889: 127–150), Mooney (1912: *ad loc.*), Seaton (1912: *ad loc.*), Fränkel (1968: *ad loc.*), Ardizzoni (1969: *ad loc.*), Paduano-Faedo (1970: 377–386), Vian (1971: *ad loc.*), Fusillo (1985: 365–366), Feeney (1991: 90–91), Goldhill (1991: 290–291), Clauss (1993: 17–18), Hunter (1993: 125), Albis (1996: 20–21), González (2000: 270–290), Hunter (2001: 99); Cuypers (2004: 47–48).

[34] Apollonius was not averse to supplementing incomplete Homeric verbal paradigms; analogously, he may have tampered with prefixes and suffixes of nouns and adjectives to coin new formations. Rengakos (1994) does not discuss the word, because it is not strictly Homeric in its own right, but merely derivative.

[35] E.g. Seaton (1888: 84–85), Mooney (1912: *ad loc.*), Fränkel (1968: *ad loc.*), Ardizzoni (1969: *ad loc.*), Vian (1974: *ad loc.*), Green (1997: *ad loc.*). For a more complete bibliography: Fusillo (1985: 357 n. 16). Even the new edition of Race (2008) still prints "inspirers," though with a note saying: "the rare term … most likely means 'interpreters' (cf. AP 14.1.), but elsewhere Apollonius consistently portrays the Muses as inspirers of his songs."

[36] Gercke (1889: 127–150), Paduano Faedo (1970: 377–386), Vian (1974: *ad loc.*), Fusillo (1985: 365–367), Feeney (1991: 90–91), Goldhill (1991: 290–291), Clauss (1993: 17–18), Hunter (1993: 125).

passage has therefore been hailed as a triumphant expression of the typically Hellenistic "anthropocentric" worldview, in rebellion against traditional subordination to the gods.[37]

It is necessary to study these apparently mutually exclusive meanings (interpreter and suggester) in closer detail. To begin with, according to the laws of the formation of *nomina agentis* in ancient Greek, ὑποφήτωρ should mean the same as ὑποφήτης:

> -*tēr* and -*tōr* occurs in nouns of relationship and in agent nouns. The agent nouns in -*tēr* and -*tōr* are numerous despite their extensive displacement by -*tēs* and -*tas*. (...) As a productive type of agent nouns this [i.e., the type of agent nouns ending in -*tēr* and -*tōr*] was displaced in Attic-Ionic prose, and partly elsewhere by that in -*tēs* and -*tas*. (...) But the older type [i.e., in -*tēr* and -*tōr*] still continued in use in poetry, including Attic tragedy, and was even to some extent productive, since the later poets came to feel that -*tēr* and -*tōr* was a stylistic device that might be freely substituted for -*tēs*.[38]

This means ὑποφήτης and ὑποφήτωρ have practically the same meaning, which makes the Muses in Apollonius "interpreters." This assumption has however frequently been challenged by critics,[39] who refuse to accept that the Muses could have been represented in ancient literature as anything but "inspirers."[40] Should we then accept the idea that the Muses are called "interpreters of my song" by Apollonius?[41] But why should the Muses be presented in 1.22 as *interpreters* of Apollonius' song to the audience when Apollonius' attitude towards them in the other invocations is so much more traditional?[42] This has been explained as follows: Apollonius starts out boldly, but gradually pretends to lose confidence in his poetic abilities as he tells his story. Eventually, he feels forced to return to the traditional model where the Muse is hierarchically placed above him.[43] In reality, there are no cogent reasons to assume that Apollonius

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[37] Paduano Faedo (1970: 377–386).

[38] Buck and Petersen (1984: 544–546), cf. Risch (1974: 28). Benveniste (1948: 56) notes that there may be a difference in nuance: -*tēs* and -*tēr* express "*l'agent d'une fonction*;" -*tōr* expresses "*l'acteur d'une acte*." It is hard to establish whether this nuance was still felt in Apollonius' time.

[39] Seaton (1888: 84–85), Mooney (1912: *ad loc.*), Fränkel (1968: *ad loc.*), Ardizzoni (1969: *ad loc.*), Vian (1974: *ad loc.*), Green (1997 *ad loc.*) and Fusillo (1985: 357 n. 16).

[40] Yet, one could argue that the dialogue of Callimachus and the Muses in *Aetia* 1–2 is another example of an untraditional way of representing this relationship.

[41] A notion supported first by Gercke (1889: 135–136).

[42] Most notably at *Arg.* 3.1–5; 4, 1–4; 4.1381–1382, on which see below.

[43] E.g. Hunter (1987: 134), (1993: 105); Feeney (1991: 90–91).

does anything as extraordinary as placing the Muses below him. The solution to the problem of the meaning "interpreter" may be found in a comparison of the passage at 1.20–22 with the use of the words ὑποφήτης and ὑποφήτωρ in other passages (within and outside of the *Argonautica*) and in the correct interpretation of the context of the *Argonautica*'s proem, as was first recognized by González.[44]

As we saw in all passages discussed above, a ὑποφήτης is an individual revealing/interpreting the will of a higher (divine) entity. This parallels the use of the word ὑποφήτωρ in post-Apollonian practice.[45] Instead of understanding the Muses as the interpreters of Apollonius' song for the benefit of the audience, therefore, a higher entity whose will the Muses reveal or interpret should be sought. Turning to the context of the invocation, that is to say, the proem of the *Argonautica*, it is obvious who this higher authority must be: "Starting from you Phoebus, I will recall the fame of men born long ago," (Ἀρχόμενος σέο Φοῖβε παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν / μνήσομαι, *Arg*. 1.1–2). From this passage, it transpires that the god Phoebus Apollo, traditionally the "*Mousagetes*," leader of the Muses[46] as well as the god of prophecy and of song, must be understood as the provider of the Muses' knowledge.[47] Apollo is specifically invoked as the god of oracles here, since the name "Phoebus" indicates him particularly in his Delphic or Pythian incarnation.[48] To reinforce this emphasis, his associates the Muses are indicated with the word ὑποφήτορες. This term, with its Homeric reminiscences, reminds the reader of the oracle of Dodona, where the prophetic Selloi resided. Moreover, the oaks of Dodona provided the prophetically speaking timber that built the Argo.[49] The oracular connection is thus emphasized from the outset of the epic,[50] determining its theme, the Argo's journey, and its poetics, which will be discussed below.

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[44] González (2000: 270–292).

[45] González (2000: 285–290) demonstrates this by an elaborate syntactic analysis of the post-Hellenistic occurrences of the word ὑποφήτωρ.

[46] Pi. fr. 94c Snell-Maehler.

[47] Albis (1996: 19–21) had already suggested this interpretation but with different conclusions. To him the Muses become *suggesters* or *inspirers* after all. González (2000: 270–292) was the first to come up with the correct interpretation of the translation *interpreters*.

[48] Cf. the explanation of the name Phoebus in Aesch. *Eum*. 1–8 and in *HH Apollo*. See on this latter text Càssola (1997: *ad loc*.), Strauss-Clay (2006).

[49] *Arg*. 1.527; 4.580–583, cf. Parke (1967: 17).

[50] Among the Argonauts Mopsus is a prophet (or should we say *hypophet*?) of the oracle at Dodona, while the prophet Idmon is a son of Apollo.

As has already been noted, Apollo plays an important role throughout the narrative of the *Argonautica* (cf. Chapter 3.6). The hymnic invocation to him indicates that he is connected to its theme and its poet, his near namesake (cf. Chapter 6). This does not mean, as Albis suggests, that ἀοιδή (1.22) should be equated with the oracle Apollo gave to *Pelias*, referred to in lines 5 and 8.[51] Rather, the Muses are proleptically asked to reveal/transmit the "*material for the song*" (i.e., ἀοιδή), to Apollonius, who turns it into a song.[52] In this set-up, the Muses act exactly like Pythian priestesses of Apollo, relaying his oracular utterances about the past to the interpreter, Apollonius. The resulting epic is a translation of Apollo's inspiration (an oracle relating to the past conveyed to the poet by the Muses) into hexameter verse.[53] Apollo thus combines his qualities of inspirational god of poetry (20) and god of prophecy (5, 8) at the beginning of this epic.[54]

Such "mantic" investigation of the distant past, hidden by intervening eras, is an activity that, like the search for truth about future events, was recognized by the Greeks as prophecy, the interpretation of divine revelation.[55] Indeed, many oracles did not predict the future so much as indicate which event in the past had occasioned a god's wrath that needed to be appeased.[56] The activity of the epic poet who traditionally told of events that took place long before was thus in many ways similar to that of the prophet.[57] As West writes:

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[51] Albis (1996: 19).

[52] González (2000: 281–282) does not see it this way and consequently hesitates to whom the song should be attributed, Apollo or Apollonius.

[53] Cf. e.g. McLeod (1961: 317–325) as to the existence of oral bards at the sanctuary at Delphi, who formed the Pythia's incomprehensible and unconnected shouts into hexameters. McLeod conjectures that they are to be identified with the προφῆται officiating at Delphi. The idea that Apollonius analogously translated the Muses' oracles into poetry has also been explored by Albis (1996: 20). González regards it as a "facile equation."

[54] The fact that Apollo is invoked earlier on and much more prominently than the Muses confirms that the Muses are his subordinates, González (2000: 283).

[55] Cuypers (2004: 47) remarks that the Muses seem to be "the opposite of prophets" who "provide insight into the past in the manner divinely inspired prophets provide insight into the future: uncertainty remains." However, "normal" prophets often provide insight into the past as well. Moreover, in *Arg.* 1.1311 ff., the *hypophetes* Glaucus refers to the *future* fate of Heracles.

[56] Cf. e.g. *Il.* 1.59–67, where Achilles proposes to ask a prophet to find out what has angered Apollo, and what can be done to appease his anger; Calchas (1.69–70 ff.) does exactly that.

[57] Hes. *Theog.* 31–33: ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐδὴν / θέσπιν, ἵνα κλείοιμι τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα, / καί μ' ἐκέλονθ' ὑμνεῖν μακάρων γένος αἰὲν ἐόντων. (They breathed into me a divine voice, so that I might be able to celebrate the future and the past and

> In the absence of written records the ability to see into the distant past is no less miraculous than the ability to see into the future, and there is no room for a sharp distinction between the two. Neither is possible without divine revelation, for only gods have the necessary first-hand knowledge.
> (West, 1966 *ad Theog.* 32)

This obviously relates to the function argued for Apollonius' Apollo and his servants, the Muses. Not only does he give the oracle about future events to the Argonauts at the time of their expedition through various seers, he also provides the poet Apollonius with inspiration and knowledge relating to the same events, now long past, via his interpreters, the Muses. From Apollo both the poet and the Argonauts receive information about the events that make up the *Argonautica*: he is its fountainhead and this is why Apollonius begins his epic with an invocation of him.

7.5. *Apollonius on Poetic Inspiration*

The word ὑποφήτωρ has now been interpreted in its context, but what further consequences does this representation of the Muses have for Apollonius' view of poetic inspiration? If Apollonius' knowledge derives from oracles, it is important to remember that "uncertainty remains on some occasions" in prophecy.[58] In *Il.* 16.235, the Homeric subtext to *Arg.* 1.20–22, this hiddenness of divine purposes is subtly alluded to by Achilles' mention of the Selloi, priests necessary to interpret the will of Zeus.[59] Inscrutability of divine motives is also a major theme of the *Argonautica*, as scholars agree. It is attractive to consider the relevance of this theme for the presentation of the relationship between narrator and Muses.

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they ordered me to hymn the race of the blessed who live forever). Apollo appears to play a certain part in this investiture, through the laurel (*Th.* 30). On the difficulty of ascertaining what future prediction Hesiod is referring to, cf. West (1966: 166), Tigerstedt (1970: 172–173). Cf. further *Il.* 1.69–70: Κάλχας Θεστορίδης οἰωνοπόλων ὄχ' ἄριστος, / ὃς ᾔδη τά τ' ἐόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα. (Calchas, the son of Thestor, the best of augurs, who knew the present, the future and the past). Cf. further Epimenides, who chose only to prophesy about the far past (fr. B4 DK). An epic poem is attributed to him about the building of the Argo and the voyage of Jason to Colchis in 6500 lines (Diog. Laert. 1.111). It is hard to establish the truth of this claim, and the relevance of it to Apollonius' epic (cf. Huxley, 1969: 60), but the coincidence is striking.

[58] Formulation Cuypers (2004: 47); for the idea, cf. González (2000: 269) and Feeney (1991: 57–98, *passim*).

[59] González (2000: 275–278).

Apollonius' representation of divine inspiration mainly differs from previous tradition in the fact that he questions *how the Muses get their knowledge*. The *locus classicus* with regard to this issue, as noted above, is *Il.* 2.484–486, where the Muses are presented as omnipresent and omniscient.[60] According to Apollonius, however, the Muses themselves are not omniscient *per se* but dependent on information they receive from Apollo, who is hierarchically above them. Apollonius apparently felt that there was a hint of subordination in the word *ὑπο*φήτης (and by implication *ὑπο*φήτωρ), which he exploited in this passage. The presentation of Glaucus also illustrates this (*Arg.* 1.1311). He is called the ὑποφήτης of Nereus, who has charged him with conveying the will of Zeus (1.1315) to the Argonauts. The fact that a divinity may be called a ὑποφήτης confirms that some gods are subordinate to others. They do not possess omniscience merely by virtue of their divinity. The hierarchy Zeus—Nereus—Glaucus—Argonauts is structurally paralleled by the representation of the Muses in 1.20–22. The oracles of Apollo (*Arg.* 1.5; 8) may have set events in motion, but they are not the ultimate cause of the expedition; they are in turn an expression of the inscrutable plan of Zeus, as appears at other instances in the epic.[61] So the hierarchy is: Zeus—Apollo—Muses—Apollonius—audience.[62]

The passage at 1.20–22, standing as it does at the opening of the epic, must be considered programmatic for Apollonius' treatment of revealed knowledge and inspiration in general. Particularly in combination with the varied representation of the Muses in the rest of the epic, it is significant for the point Apollonius tries to make: poetic inspiration is not a straightforward or simple process, but a problematic, equivocal, and complex one consisting of many elements.[63] So if the narrator sometimes believes and needs the Muses,[64] sometimes appears to doubt their

[60] Cf. e.g. Murray (1981: 90–91), de Jong (1987: 51).

[61] Cf. the passage discussed earlier, *Arg.* 1.1310–1320. On the inscrutability of the will of Zeus in the *Argonautica* and its connection with the oracles of Apollo, cf. Feeney (1991: 59–67).

[62] Cf. Pl. *Ion* 533d–e where poetic inspiration is compared to magnetism: like a magnet infuses its power into an iron ring, which in turn attracts other iron rings, so the Muse inspires poets, who in turn infuse their "enthusiasm" into their audience. In Apollonius' case, the hierarchy is extended upwardly, to include Apollo and Zeus.

[63] Contrast González (2000: 270–292), who tries to homogenize the invocations.

[64] As he clearly does at 3.1–4: Εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν Ἐρατώ, παρ' ἔμ' ἵστασο καί μοι ἔνισπε ... (Come now, Erato, stand by me and tell me ...); 4.1–5: Αὐτὴ νῦν κάματόν γε θεὰ καὶ δήνεα κούρης / Κολχίδος ἔννεπε Μοῦσα, Διὸς τέκος. (You must tell me yourself now, goddess, the suffering and wiles of the Colchian girl, Muse, daughter of Zeus ...); 4.552–

information[65] or reluctantly relates it,[66] and sometimes even speaks against the will of the Muses,[67] this should be interpreted as illustrating various facets of Apollonius' knowledge about the past.

Some remarks may illustrate this. Apart from his remarkably varied invocations of the Muses, the narrator occasionally emphasizes his qualms about the truth of his narrative by his use of the particle πoυ (I suppose), which normally marks statements as assumptions, not as the certainties of an omniscient narrator.[68] This kind of usage is never found in utterances of the omniscient narrator of the Homeric epics and is more congenial to a narrator of a work of historiography wishing to express his reservations when his sources are in conflict.[69] Clearly, then, Apollonius does not represent himself as an omniscient narrator receiving unequivocal or directly comprehensible information from the Muses; it is not something the Muses always may or will provide. This acknowledgement of the problematic character of information relating to the past may be read as a metaphor for Apollonius' own negotiation of sources and informed invention about that past.[70] That practically all information relating to the Greek past was stored in the *Mouseion* (lit. "shrine of

557: Ἀλλὰ θεαί, πῶς … (But goddesses, how …?); 4.1381–1388: Μουσάων ὅδε μῦθος, ἐγὼ δ' ὑπακουὸς ἀείδω / Πιερίδων, καὶ τήνδε πανατρεκὲς ἔκλυον ὀμφήν. (This is the tale of the Muses and I sing obediently to the Pierides, and this report did I hear quite clearly.).

[65] Cf. e.g. at *Arg.* 1.24, where the verb φατίζεται (it is told) clashes strangely with the invocation of the Muses two lines earlier, cf. Cuypers (2004: 50).

[66] *Arg.* 2.844–845: εἰ δέ με καὶ τό / χρειὼ ἀπηλεγέως Μουσέων ὕπο γηρύσασθαι … (If at the bidding of the Muses I must tell this tale outright …).

[67] *Arg.* 4.984–985: ἵλατε Μοῦσαι, / οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐνέπω προτέρων ἔπος … (Be gracious, Muses, unwillingly do I tell this tale of olden days …).

[68] Cuypers (2005: 41–45). Examples: 1.636; 1.972–975; 1.996–997; 1.1023; 1.1037; 1.1140; 1.1222; 2.607; 2.1028; 3.926; 3.1457, 3.1397; 4.557–558. Knight (1995: 269) mentions "Apollonius' concern with partial knowledge, mistaken belief and incomplete revelation." Cf. Feeney (1991: 88–90).

[69] Cuypers (2004: 46) remarks upon "Apollonius' negotiation of the seemingly incompatible rhetorical strategies of the epic storyteller who knows and states, inspired by the Muses, and the historian who argues from evidence." On the difference between the narrative voices of the *Argonautica* and the Homeric epics, see Hunter (1993: 101–119).

[70] Cuypers (2004: 47) thinks that some Muse-invocations (e.g. 4.984–985) resist such a reading. But the fact that Apollonius here pretends to be telling a story the Muses *dislike* constitutes a reference to Pl. *Resp.* 377e, where it is said that the tale of Cronus' castration (referred to in *Arg.* 4.985–986) is better not told. In addition, it points to the fact that Apollonius here disagrees with Call. *Aet.* fr. 43.69–71 Pf. about the island at which the sickle that castrated Cronus was kept, cf. Livrea (1973: *ad loc.*). This invocation addresses the conflicting traditions surrounding this story, and at the discussion of what is fitting (*prepon*) in epic.

the Muses"), an institution with cultic associations of which Apollonius was the director, may well be relevant to this particular conception of poetic inspiration.[71] The Muses would not always provide unambiguous information; likewise, the documents in the Museum might not provide clarity on all aspects of the distant past. They might contradict each other, evoke doubts, relate incredible stories, or simply be silent on certain matters.

7.6. *Parallel Representations of the Muses*

In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus compliments Demodocus on his singing skills by saying "the Muses must have taught you, or Apollo." In this conception, Apollo and the Muses are both related to the art of the bard, but there is no sign of a hierarchy between them. The poetry of Apollonius' contemporaries, however, does provide parallels of such hierarchies in which the Muses function as transmitters subordinate to a higher authority. Aratus is one such author. He begins his didactic poem as follows:

> Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, τὸν οὐδέποτ' ἄνδρες ἐῶμεν
> ἄρρητον· μεσταὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγυιαί,
> πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθτρώπων ἀγοραί, μεστὴ δὲ θάλασσα
> καὶ λιμένες· πάντη δὲ Διὸς κεχρήμεθα πάντες.
> Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμέν. Ὁ δ' ἤπιος ἀνθρώποισι
> δεξιὰ σημαίνει ... (*Ph.* 1–6)

> Let us begin with Zeus, whom we men never leave unspoken. Filled with Zeus are all highways and all meetingplaces of people, filled are the sea and the harbors; in all circumstances we are all dependent on Zeus.
> (transl. Kidd)

In this proem, Aratus presents his poetic venture as a way of translating the omnipresent signs of Zeus (especially the heavenly bodies) into humanly comprehensible language, in this case didactic poetry. For this undertaking, as he later states, he also needs the Muses, who will point out to him (τεκμήρατε, 18) how he is to name the stars (ἀστέρας εἰπεῖν,

[71] On the religious overtones of the *Mouseion* and its employees, see Fraser (1972: I, 324), Weber (1993: 353), Too (1998: 119). Diod. Sic. (1.49.3) calls the Alexandrian library "sacred." For a remarkable parallel, cf. Ath. 634c–d on the famous scholar Aristarchus: Ἀρίσταρχος ὁ γραμματικός, ὃν μάντιν ἐκάλει Παναίτιος ὁ Ῥόδιος φιλόσοφος διὰ τὸ ῥαδίως καταμαντεύεσθαι τῆς τῶν ποιημάτων διανοίας. (Aristarchus the grammarian, whom Panaetius of Rhodes the philosopher called a seer, through his great ability to interpret the deeper meaning of poems).

17) and interpret them so that they will become a song. It may be assumed that the Muses receive this information from Zeus, who initially designed and ordered the heavens:[72]

> Χαῖρε, πάτερ, μέγα θαῦμα, μέγ' ἀνθρώποισιν ὄνειαρ,
> αὐτὸς καὶ προτέρη γενεή. Χαίροιτε δὲ Μοῦσαι
> μειλίχιαι μάλα πᾶσαι. Ἐμοί γε μὲν ἀστέρας εἰπεῖν
> ᾗ θέμις εὐχομένῳ τεκμήρατε πᾶσαν ἀοιδήν. (*Phaen.* 15–18)

> Hail, Father, great wonder, great boon to men, yourself and the earlier race! And hail, Muses, all most gracious! In answer to my prayer to tell of the stars in so far as I may, guide all my singing. (transl. Kidd)

In this passage, then, the poet is presented as receiving information about the plan of the uppermost divinity Zeus through the intercession of the Muses.[73] In reality, Aratus' source of inspiration and knowledge about the heavenly bodies was the prose treatise of the fourth-century astronomer Eudoxus.[74] In a similar way, Apollonius plunders the works of earlier historians and geographers to describe the Argonautic journey as if relying on "revealed knowledge" reaching him from Apollo through the Muses.

Another parallel, albeit of a slightly different nature, for Apollonius' representation of divine inspiration and the difficulty of shaping it into poetry may be found in Lycophron's *Alexandra*.[75] In this poem, Apollo inspires the Trojan prophetess Cassandra about the fate of Troy and all that will happen afterwards. Her enigmatic prophecy is relayed by a messenger to her father, King Priam. A narratological analysis of this poem is revealing:

> The key thing about Apollo as a narrator [in the *Alexandra*] is that he does not, strictly speaking, narrate; rather he instills narrative content directly into the consciousness of its recipient [i.e., Cassandra]. In effect, this is narrative unmediated by any form of actual narration, and part of Cassandra's problem is that the *fabula* instilled in her—the whole of human history—has no intrinsic or pre-formed narrative shape; it is up to her to give it one … (Lowe, 2004: 309)

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[72] Cf. the implication of the title of the *Diosèmeia*, a lost didactic work of Aratus.

[73] Another less elaborate parallel may perhaps be found in the opening of Posidipp. AB 118. εἴ τι καλόν, Μοῦσαι πολιήτιδες, ἢ παρὰ Φοίβου / χρυσολύρεω καθαροῖς οὔασιν ἐκλ[ύ]ετε … (If ever, Muses of my city, you have with pure ears heard anything beautiful, either from Phoebus of the golden lyre …), cf. Ch. 6.4.

[74] Cf. Ch. 5.2.

[75] On the dating of this enigmatic poem, cf. Kosmetatou (2000: 32–53). It is possibly much later than the works discussed here.

Apollo's inspiration in this poem is once more an expression of the plan of Zeus, so the resulting hierarchy of narrating instances in the *Alexandra* (Zeus—Apollo—Cassandra—Messenger—Priam—Lycophron—audience)[76] recalls that in the *Argonautica* (Zeus—Apollo—Muses—Apollonius—audience). The *Argonautica* illustrates the problems accrued by the hierarchically relayed oracular information about the past through emphasizing the unepic insecurity of the narrator. In the *Alexandra*, on the other hand, the difficulty of interpreting oracles about the future and shaping them into a narrative is dramatically embodied in the deliberately enigmatic language that made Lycophron notorious. This could be read as Lycophron's way of expressing the difficulties of the task of representing facts his audience knew as myth and history as an oracle about future events.

7.7. *Theocritus*

We now turn to the passages in Theocritus' *Idylls* where poets are named ὑποφῆται. What connects these passages? In the first place, all three poems play with the format of hymn poetry.[77] A single unifying theme moreover underlies them, the procuring of κλέος (fame in song) by the poet for the dedicatees. In each of the poems, this process is somehow problematic.

7.7.1. Idyll *16:* Κλέος *and Prophecy*

Idyll 16 has been named an "*Enkomium der Zukunft*" (Vahlen 1883: 211) because it predominantly expresses wishes for the future instead of enumerating laudable past accomplishments. This has been explained by the fact that Hiero II of Syracuse, the *laudandus* of the poem, had not done anything by the time Theocritus wrote his encomium.[78] In the poem, the word ὑποφῆται occurs (16.22–31) in an offer of advice about the best way to spend money:

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[76] Although in the *Alexandra*, where there is no external narrator, these last two categories remain implicit.

[77] Forms of ὕμνος / ὑμνεῖν in 16.2 (twice); 50; 103; 17.8 (twice) 22.1; 4; 10; 26; 135; 214; 219. On the remarkable popularity of hymnic poetry in the Ptolemaic age, see Hunter (1996: 46–48). On the close parallels between the opening of 16 and 17 and the *HH*, see Fantuzzi (2001: 232–233, n. 1).

[78] So already *Schol. ad* 16 (Wendel 1914: 325), Gow (1952: II, 305–307), Griffiths (1979: 12–16); contrast Hunter (1996: 77–78), who thinks this is merely a topical fiction.

Δαιμόνιοι, τί δὲ κέρδος ὁ μυρίος ἔνδοθι χρυσός
κείμενος; οὐχ ἅδε πλούτου φρονέουσιν ὄνασις,
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ψυχᾷ, τὸ δέ πού τινι δοῦναι ἀοιδῶν·
πολλοὺς δ'εὖ ἔρξαι πηῶν, πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ ἄλλων
ἀνθρώπων, αἰεὶ δὲ θεοῖς ἐπιβώμια ῥέζειν,
μηδὲ ξεινοδόκον κακὸν ἔμμεναι ἀλλὰ τραπέζῃ
μειλίξαντ' ἀποπέμψαι ἐπὴν ἐθέλωντι νέεσθαι,
Μοισάων δὲ μάλιστα τίειν ἱεροὺς ὑποφήτας.
ὄφρα καὶ εἰν Ἀίδαο κεκρυμμένος ἐσθλὸς ἀκούσῃς,
μηδ' ἀκλεὴς μύρηαι ἐπὶ ψυχροῦ Ἀχέροντος ... (16.22–31)

Fools, what gain is it, the gold that lies uncounted in your coffers? Herein is not, to thinking men, the profit of wealth, but rather to be generous to one's own desires, and to some poet too, maybe; to do kindness to many of one's kin, and to many too of other folk; and ever to sacrifice to the altars of the gods, nor play the churlish host, but to treat the stranger kindly at one's board and speed him when he would be gone; but most of all to honor the holy ὑποφῆται of the Muses, that even when you are hidden in Hades you may be well spoken of and not mourn unhonored on the chill shore of Acheron ... (transl. Gow, adapted)

In this passage, ὑποφήτας (29) looks like a doublure of the more usual term for poets, ἀοιδοί (24).[79] It seems unsubtle on the part of Theocritus to advise Hiero twice in the compass of five lines to spend his money on *poets*, so it is attractive to assume that the two words indicate two different types of singers. This may be explained as follows (cf. Chapter 2.3): in 5–21, Theocritus complains that people are not prepared anymore to spend money on living poets who may earn them κλέος. They think the poets of the past are enough. This is a serious misunderstanding, as Theocritus, with an eye on his own profit, duly attempts to point out. To procure fame, one needs the inspiration of the Muses and must sing of a contemporary human subject.[80] This inspiration is not the same as the ability to perform the songs of dead poets about the gods or the heroes of the past. Hence, Theocritus distinguishes between the ἀοιδοί of line 24 (rhapsodes) and the ὑποφῆται Μοισάων of 29 (creative poets), who are able to provide the living with κλέος.[81]

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[79] Wifstrand (1963: 309) reads 16.29 as a recapitulation, and stresses the connection between μάλιστα and ὄφρα.

[80] Cf. 16.58: Ἐκ Μοισᾶν ἀγαθὸν κλέος ἔρχεται ἀνθρώποισι. (From the Muses comes noble fame for men); 69–70: χαλεπαὶ γὰρ ὁδοὶ τελέθουσιν ἀοιδοῖς / κουράων ἀπάνευθε Διὸς μέγα βουλεύοντος. (For the roads are difficult for singers without the help of the daughters of Zeus of the mighty counsel).

[81] He is not consistent in this distinction; in the rest of the poem both poets and rhapsodes are referred to by the word ἀοιδός. At 16.103 it seems there is a complete

The claim that it is the specific privilege of ὑποφῆται to glorify the living sits very well with what Maehler remarks about the analogous expression "prophet of the Muses" in Pindar:[82]

> *Das erinnert an die alte Vorstellung die hinter dem Homerischen* ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα *steht, aber schon bei Homer war das zum bloßen Klischee geworden, und während die homerischen Sänger einfach berichten wollen, was sich zugetragen hat, und sich nur darum bemühen müssen es* κατὰ κόσμον *d.h. möglichst genau und vollständig zu tun, ist das was Pindar zu verkünden hat viel prinzipieller verborgen; er will nicht das Geschehen berichten, sondern das edle rühmen, aber eben das sieht er in Frage gestellt und von dem "blinden Sinn" der Leute verkannt.* (Maehler, 1963: 98)

Like Pindar, Theocritus identifies the specific power of the Muse-inspired poet in this context particularly as the ability to provide ἀγαθὸν κλέος to the living. To do so, he does not need to make the Muse subordinate to another god, but presents her in her traditional guise of purveyor of divine knowledge and wisdom, a goddess in her own right. The poet is her priest and interpreter; Apollo has no place in this concept.

Nevertheless, the emphatic return to the concept of "prophet of the Muses" is remarkable, since it shows that Theocritus, like Apollonius, seeks to return to the ancient (mantic/vatic) origins of poetry in his self-representation: poet and prophet apparently have to be reunited if poetry is to be successful in this new age. This is confirmed by the emphatically oracular prediction of the triumphant emergence of the dedicatee, a heroic Hiero who will scare away the Carthaginians (71–81).[83] In this poem, revealed knowledge coming from the Muses clearly is not enigmatic and does not relate to the past. It is, however, the exclusive possession of the (inspired) poet.

7.7.2. Idyll *17: Immortal Fame for an Immortal King*

In *Idyll* 17 Theocritus, wishing to provide the king of Egypt with fame, encounters another kind of problem.[84] At first sight, Ptolemy Philadelphus appears eminently fit for celebration in song because of his

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merging of rhapsodes, Muse-inspired singers and creative poets, all striving to sing the praises of Hiero and Syracuse. It is of course Hiero who enables this profusion (and fusion) of poetry.

[82] Pi. fr. 150 Snell-Maehler and *Paean* fr. 52F6 Snell-Maehler.

[83] E.g. 16.73: ἔσσεται οὗτος ἀνὴρ ὃς ἐμεῦ κεχρήσετ' ἀοιδοῦ … Cf. Gow (1952: II, 320): "emphatic prophecy," Dover (1971: *ad loc.*): "His language is a shade oracular." For the tone, cf. e.g. *Il.* 4.164: ἔσσεται ἦμαρ.

[84] Cf. Goldhill (1991: 277) who remarks upon "the difficulty of discovering a strategy

achievements (77–105). Unlike Hiero, he is moreover willing to pay poets for this favor (106–117). Clearly, then, he should be able to gain as much κλέος as he wants:

οὐδὲ Διωνύσου τις ἀνὴρ ἱεροὺς κατ' ἀγῶνας
ἵκετ' ἐπιστάμενος λιγυρὰν ἀναμέλψαι ἀοιδάν,
ᾧ οὐ δωτίναν ἀντάξιον ὤπασε τέχνας
Μουσάων δ' ὑποφῆται ἀείδοντι Πτολεμαῖον
ἀντ' εὐεργεσίης. τί δὲ κάλλιον ἀνδρί κεν εἴη
ὀλβίῳ ἢ κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἀρέσθαι;
τοῦτο καὶ Ἀτρεΐδαισι μένει· τὰ δὲ μυρία τῆνα
ὅσσα μέγαν Πριάμοιο δόμον κτεάτισσαν ἑλόντες
ἀέρι πᾳ κέκρυπται, ὅθεν πάλιν οὐκέτι νόστος. (17.112–120)

And never comes there for the sacred contests of Dionysus one skilled to raise his clear-voiced song but he receives the gift his art deserves and those ὑποφῆται of the Muses sing of Ptolemy for his benefactions. And for a prosperous man what finer aim is there than to win him goodly fame on earth? That is abiding even for the House of Atreus, while the countless treasure won when they took the great halls of Priam lies hidden somewhere in that darkness whence there is no return.
(transl. Gow, adapted)

Traditional though the thought expressed here may be, there is something remarkably odd about this passage, since, considering whom he is addressing it seems as if Theocritus "flirts with disaster," because "such a *memento mori* seems like a fatal misjudgement at the christening of a new and, by its own insistence, immortal dynasty" (Griffiths, 1979: 81). Indeed, this is Theocritus' problem: Ptolemy is no mere mortal:[85]

Μοῦνος ὅδε προτέρων τε καὶ ὧν ἔτι θερμὰ κονία
στειβομένα καθύπερθε ποδῶν ἐκμάσσεται ἴχνη,
ματρὶ φίλᾳ καὶ πατρὶ θυώδεας εἵσατο ναούς· (17.121–123)

Of men of old and of those the imprint of whose steps still warm the trodden dust holds beneath the foot, Ptolemy alone has founded fragrant shrines for his dear mother and his father ... (transl. Gow)

Would such a king still need a poet to gain him κλέος and save him from oblivion after death? The immortality of his parents seems to

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of celebration which is adequate to the new circumstances of the Ptolemaic dynastic rule, but which is not diminished in contrast with the great tradition of Greek encomiastic verse."

[85] Cf. Goldhill (1991: 279–280). Hunter (2003: 149) merely remarks: "Gods may have higher rewards, but ολβίωι (120) reminds Ptolemy of his privileged position (sc. among mankind)."

imply at least that, once Philadelphus himself departs from this world, he will be among the gods on Olympus; he will certainly never be "nameless and forgotten, wailing on the banks of cold Acheron."[86] How does Theocritus approach this problem in the rest of the poem? Is there a way out?

Lines 17.16–33 have already sketched the immortal existence on Olympus of Ptolemy Soter, Philadelphus' father. The tone of the passage is strikingly similar to that of for instance the *Homeric Hymns* to (Olympic) divinities, in its use of a quasi omni-temporal present tense to describe the actions of the divine Ptolemy Soter.[87] In setting the scene on Olympus, it moreover provides an insight that is normally inaccessible to ordinary mortals. The implication of the passage is therefore that only a vessel of the revealed knowledge of the Muses is able to envisage this scene.[88] This is of course where the Μουσάων ὑποφῆται (119) necessarily come in, among whom Theocritus may once more be reckoned.[89] Although Ptolemy clearly does not need to fear oblivion in Hades like his mortal contemporaries, even he, immortal as he is, needs a poet. This had in fact already been acknowledged in the phrase ὕμνοι δὲ καὶ ἀθανάτων γέρας αὐτῶν (hymns are the gift of honor even for the gods, 8).[90] If Ptolemy is a god, he will need hymns; hymns are the province of the Μουσάων ὑποφῆται. Having more or less solved the problem thus, Theocritus ends his encomiastic hymn on a prophetic note once more:[91]

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[86] *Id.* 16.30–31, this is the fate that awaits Hiero should he not employ a poet.

[87] E.g. *Id.* 17.19: ἑδριάει; 22: θαλίας ἔχει; 25: ἀθάνατοι δὲ καλεῦνται; 30: ἐδῶκεν (gnomic aorist).

[88] Cf. Call. *Ektheosis Arsinoes* (fr. 228Pf.), which is located on Olympus as well. The opening phrase of the fragment (Ἀγέτω θεός, οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ δίχα τῶνδ' ἀείδειν, let a goddess lead, for I am not competent to sing of these things) suggests the referring of the song to a higher (divine) authority.

[89] Hunter (2003: 148) connects the word with the Hes. *Theog.* 80–93. Weber (1993: 322) thinks the phrase points to the fellows of the Alexandrian Museum; however, as noted, the word also occurs in the Sicilian *Id.* 16.

[90] Cf. Pi. fr. 121 Snell-Maehler: πρέπει δ' ἐσλοῖσιν ὑμνεῖσθαι … καλλίσταις ἀοιδαῖς./τοῦτο γὰρ ἀθανάτοις τιμαῖς ποτιψαύει μόνον,/θνᾴσκει δὲ σιγαθὲν καλὸν ἔργον. (It is proper for good men to be hymned … with the noblest songs, for that alone touches upon immortal honors, but a noble deed dies when left in silence). What makes the phrase in 17.8 even more piquant is the fact that it alludes to the Homeric subtext ὃ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων (for that is the honor for the dead). For the thought that song is the best gift because it is immortal, cf. Call. *Iamb.* 12 (fr. 202 Pf.).

[91] Cf. Hunter (2003: 197): "φθέγξομαι suggests the prophetic voice of archaic lyric (cf. Pi. *O.* 2.92)."

Χαῖρε, ἄναξ Πτολεμαῖε· σέθεν δ' ἐγὼ ἶσα καὶ ἄλλων
μνάσομαι ἡμιθέων, δοκέω δ' ἔπος οὐκ ἀπόβλητον
φθέγξομαι ἐσσομένοις· ἀρετήν γε μὲν ἐκ Διὸς αἰτεῦ. (135–137)

Farewell Prince Ptolemy, and of you no less than of other demigods will I make mention, and I will utter, methinks, a word which men hereafter shall not reject; but for excellence you must pray to Zeus.
(transl. Gow, adapted)

Yet, prophecy apart, the passage is somewhat problematic: in the last half line, it almost seems as if Theocritus is saying that Ptolemy has not yet achieved any ἀρετή (excellence); a somewhat improper claim at the end of an encomium.[92] The Hesiodic subtext of the *Kings and Singers* passage, which informs much of the rest of the poem,[93] may be relevant here too:

ὅντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο
γεινόμενόν τε ἴδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήων,
τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρσην,
τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα· (...)
(...)
ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀν' ἀγῶνα θεὸν ὣς ἱλάσκονται
αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισι.
τοίη Μουσάων ἱερὴ δόσις ἀνθρώποισιν.
ἐκ γάρ τοι Μουσέων καὶ ἑκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος
ἄνδρες ἀοιδοὶ ἔασιν ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ κιθαρισταί
ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες· ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅντινα Μοῦσαι
φίλωνται·γλυκερή οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥέει αὐδή. (*Theog.* 81–98)

Whomever among zeus-nourished kings the daughters of great Zeus honor and behold when he is born, they pour sweet dew upon his tongue, and his words flow soothingly from his mouth. (...) and as he goes up to the gathering they seek his favor like a god with soothing reverence, and he is conspicuous among the assembled people. Such is the holy gift of the Muses to human beings. For it is from the Muses and far-shooting Apollo that men are poets upon the earth and lyre-players, but it is from Zeus that they are kings; and that man is blessed, whomever the Muses love, for the speech flows sweet from his mouth. (transl. Most)

King Ptolemy has already received the gifts of the Muses, thanks to Theocritus (who is their servant and Apollo's), but he must look to his own patron god Zeus for the specifically "kingly" gift of ἀρετή, which will make people treat him like the god he is. Judging by the rest of

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[92] Gow (1952: II, *ad loc.*) glosses ἀρετή as "glory, victorious achievement." He believes the passage indicates that the Syrian war was not yet brought to a successful end.

[93] Cf. Hunter (2003: *ad loc.*). On the *Kings and Singers* passage and its programmatic message in Hesiod, see Stoddard (2003: 80–103).

the poem this should not prove to be a problem, since through the intercession of his father Ptolemy Soter and his forefather Heracles, Zeus' own son, Ptolemy Philadelphus may assume to be in Zeus' good books. Through the allusion to Hesiod, the gifts of Zeus and that of the prophet of the Muses are moreover implicitly coupled like they are in the *Theogony*; together they determine the immortality of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

7.7.3. Idyll *22: Rewriting the Poetic Past*

The final instance of the word ὑποφήτης is found in the complex *Idyll* 22. In this poem, the poet sets out to hymn both the Dioscuri together (1–26) and then Polydeuces (27–136) and Castor (137–211) separately. The first striking characteristic of the poem is that its second half, narrating the fight of the Dioscuri with the Apharetids (22.134–211), does not recount the fate of its heroes in the traditional, well known, way (cf. Chapter 3.9). Considering the protean quality of Greek myth, this may appear unsurprising, but it must be noted that Theocritus' twenty-second *Idyll* actually underlines the fact that the poet presents a revisionary version of the tale.[94]

The best known tale about this fight is as follows. According to Pindar *Nemean* 10, the Tyndarids or Dioscuri once got into a fight with the sons of Aphareus, Idas and Lynceus "for some reason to do with cattle" (*N.* 10.60). Castor, the mortal twin, son of Tyndareus, was killed by the Apharetids. Polydeuces, son of Zeus, was so shattered with grief at the death of his brother that he wished to die as well. Zeus offered him the following choice:

εἰ μὲν θάνατόν τε φυγὼν καὶ
  γῆρας ἀπεχθόμενον
αὐτὸς Οὔλυμπον θέλεις ⟨ναίειν ἐμοὶ⟩
  σύν τ' Ἀθαναίᾳ κελαινεγχεῖ τ' Ἄρει,
ἔστι σοι τούτων λάχος· εἰ δὲ κασιγνήτου πέρι
μάρνασαι, πάντων δὲ νοεῖς ἀποδάσσασθαι ἴσον,
ἥμισυ μέν κε πνέοις γαίας ὑπένερθεν ἐών,
ἥμισυ δ' οὐρανοῦ ἐν χρυσ⟨έοι⟩ς δόμοισιν. (*N.* 10.82–88)

[94] Cf. Hutchinson (1988: 163: n. 33), Sens (1997: 216–220). For a discussion of the differences in treatment of the Amycus-myth between Theocritus (22.27–133) and Apollonius (*Arg.* 2.1–97), see Köhnken (2001: 86). He claims that in this case Theocritus presents the more traditional account of the myth (in Apollonius' version Amycus dies, in that of Theocritus he lives).

> If you wish to escape death and hated old age and to dwell in Olympus yourself with me and with Athena and Ares of the dark spear, you can have this lot. But if you strive to save your brother and intend to share everything equally with him, then you may breathe for half the time below the earth and for half the time in the golden homes of heaven.
>
> (transl. Race)

Polydeuces chooses to share death as well as immortality with his brother; hence the Dioscuri reside part of the time on Olympus and part in Hades.[95]

In Homer, the story appears to be different still. At *Il.* 3, the *teichoscopia*, Helen speculates about the reason for the absence of her brothers; she fears they may have declined coming to Troy for fear of being shamed on her account. The narrator remarks that in reality they were already dead and buried in their native Lacedaemon.[96] This passage constitutes the single mention in the *Iliad* of the Dioscuri. Their irrevocable death (no part-time immortality on Olympus here) implies that they share the status of the other mortal Homeric heroes; they are no divinities.

Theocritus presents a remarkably different ending to the story of the Dioscuri. Instead of dying or becoming partly mortal and partly immortal, they survive, and emerge victoriously from the battles they wage, illustrating the narrator's remark: "No light thing it is to war with the sons of Tyndareus. They are mighty, and sons of a mighty sire." (Οὕτω Τυνδαρίδαις πολεμιζέμεν οὐκ ἐν ἐλαφρῷ·/αὐτοί τε κρατέουσι καὶ ἐκ κρατέοντος ἔφυσαν, 22.211–212).[97] Once this rather remarkable difference between the tradition, particularly the *Iliad*, and *Idyll* 22 is acknowledged, certain aspects of the hymnic *envoi* start to look enigmatic:

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[95] For a mortal Castor and immortal Polydeuces, cf. *Cypria* (Bernabé fr. 8): Κάστωρ μὲν θνητός, θανάτου δέ οἱ αἶσα πέπρωται,/αὐτὰρ ὅ γ' ἀθάνατος Πολυδεύκης, ὄζος Ἄρηος. (Castor is mortal, and his fatal day is set; but the other one, Polydeuces, is immortal, that shoot of Ares).

[96] *Il.* 3.236–244: Ὣς φάτο, τοὺς δ' ἤδη κάτεχεν φυσίζοος αἶα/ἐν Λακεδαίμονι αὖθι φίλῃ ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ (243–244): (Thus she spoke, but the lifegiving earth already held them, right in Lacedaemon, their own fatherland). The scholia *ad loc.* note that Zenodotus claimed that they had been left in Greece as governors. D (*ad* 243) explicitly contrasts Homer's version with Pindar's.

[97] Cf. Pi. *N.* 10.72: χαλεπὰ δ' ἔρις ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλεῖν κρεσσόνων. (It is hard for mortals to wage battle with their betters) and Call. *Hymn.* II, 25, with the remarks of Williams (1978: *ad loc.*).

χαίρετε, Λήδας τέκνα, καὶ ἡμετέροις κλέος ὕμνοις
ἐσθλὸν ἀεὶ πέμποιτε. φίλοι δέ τε πάντες ἀοιδοί
Τυνδαρίδαις Ἑλένῃ τε καὶ ἄλλοις ἡρώεσσιν,
Ἴλιον οἳ διέπερσαν ἀρήγοντες Μενελάῳ.
ὑμῖν κῦδος, ἄνακτες, ἐμήσατο Χῖος ἀοιδός,
ὑμνήσας Πριάμοιο πόλιν καὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν
Ἰλιάδας τε μάχας Ἀχιλῆά τε πύργον ἀυτῆς·
ὑμῖν αὖ καὶ ἐγὼ λιγεῶν μειλίγματα Μουσέων,
οἷ' αὐταὶ παρέχουσι καὶ ὡς ἐμὸς οἶκος ὑπάρχει,
τοῖα φέρω. γεράων δὲ θεοῖς κάλλιστον ἀοιδαί. (22.213–222)

Farewell, sons of Leda, and send ever noble renown upon our hymns. All bards are dear to the sons of Tyndareus, to Helen and to the other heroes that aided Menelaus to sack Ilium. Glory for you, princes, the bard of Chios fashioned when he hymned the town of Priam and the ships of the Achaeans, the battles round Ilium, and Achilles, that tower of strength in fight. And to you I too bear the soothing strains of the clearvoiced Muses such as they give me and my own store provides; and for gods songs are the fairest meed. (transl. Gow, adapted)

This passage seems to proclaim that Theocritus thinks that Homer has provided the Dioscuri with renown, in the *Iliad*.[98] This is a problem, for, as noted, the *Iliad* mentions them only in passing, and what is more, as already dead. As Gow puts it: "However we seek to evade this difficulty, the objection remains that, in a hymn which celebrates the Dioscuri as gods, any reference to the *Iliad* is unfortunate, since, according to that authority, they were of the same clay as the other heroes."

Considering Theocritus' expert knowledge of Homeric poetry, it is hard to believe this was some slip of the pen;[99] the incongruity is

[98] That this is the poem Theocritus is thinking of is strongly suggested by the synoptic description in 22.218–219. Gow (1952: II, 406) remarks that it is natural to take ἐμήσατο (22.217) and ὑμνήσας (22.218) as referring to the same action, cf. Sens (1997: 218–219).

[99] Gow (1952: II, 406–407) considers the possibility that Theocritus is referring to the *Cypria* (cf. Cameron 1995: 436) but concludes (on the basis of *Id.* 16.49) that Theocritus did not ascribe this poem to Homer. At any rate, according to the *Cypria*, the Dioscuri were not wholly immortal either. Dover (1971: 250) and Hunter (1996: 76) interpret ὑμῖν (22.218) as referring to another group of heroes than ὑμῖν (22.221). Yet, even if 22.218 refers to a wider group of heroes, it should still include the Dioscuri, who are certainly addressed in 22.223 as θεοί, cf. Sens (1997: 210). Griffiths (1976: 363–367) argues that the narrative voice in *Id.* 22 must be understood as a parody of a narrator who does not know what he is claiming; Laursen (1992: 92) sees the passage as an indication of Theocritus' ethical views about the *Iliad*: the fact that the Dioscuri did not participate in the war

presumably intended. It seems more attractive to conjecture that Theocritus deliberately invites his readers to contrast his own poetic treatment of the Dioscuri with the brief handling they receive in the *Iliad*.[100] It might of course be argued that the mere fact that the Dioscuri are referred to at all in the *Iliad* gains them immortal fame.[101] Yet, Theocritus strives to procure them a *different kind* of immortality, or immortal fame. His poem actually brings the Dioscuri back to life: if neither of them died in the battle with the Apharetids, they would have been alive to wage war in the *Iliad*, and could have gained undying renown. Theocritus restores this possibility like the true a divine prophet of the Muses he claims to be: this explains his statement that he brings to the Dioscuri both the gifts of the Muses (here the Muses would seem to stand for the poetic tradition as symbolized amongst others by Homer) and items from his own store.

This demonstration of poetic prowess may have been given for the benefit of the Ptolemies, who accorded an important status to the Dioscuri in royal cult. They may even have perceived a kind of "typological" similarity between their own status and that of the Dioscuri.[102] The hymn is thus another meditation on κλέος, immortality and poetry: poetry proves to be of the essence for the gaining of κλέος. This is what is expressed, slightly varying the adage of 17.8, near the end of *Idyll* 22: hymns are the most beautiful of honors for the gods (γεράων δὲ θεοῖς κάλλιστον ἀοιδαί, 22.223). Hymns are "better than shrines, sacrifices, processions and other honors" (Sens, 1997 *ad loc.*), because they immortalize by revealing what usually remains hidden from the sight of men (as in 17), or by setting right what has become (wrongly) established by tradition (as in 22).[103] In Theocritus' hymn, the

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around Troy counts as laudable. This oddly neglects to take account of the bloody and unjust battles *Id.* 22 describes.

[100] Hutchinson (1988: 163, n. 33), cf. Ch. 3.9.

[101] Even though they are dead and therefore hardly able to gain κῦδος, with its particular meaning of "glory won in battle" (cf. LSJ *s.v.*).

[102] Note the alternation between "sons of Zeus" and "sons of Tyndareus." Cf. the double paternity of Heracles (Amphitryo and Zeus, cf. *Id.* 24); Alexander (Zeus-Ammon and Philip); the same seems implied of Ptolemy Soter (Lagos and Zeus?) at *Id.* 17.16, cf. Hunter (2003: 111).

[103] Cf. the way Pindar changes traditional myth to fit his own conception of the divine (e.g. *O.* 1.35–41; *O.* 9.35–40; *N.* 7.22–27; 8.32–37), on which see Sperduti (1950: 235), Pfeijffer (2004: 222–223).

Dioscuri have become immortals, as the Argonauts in Apollonius' epic "hymn" (cf. Chapter 3.6), and Ptolemy in the seventeenth hymnic *Idyll*.

7.8. *Conclusion*

By representing the Muses as the "interpreters" of Apollo for the benefit of his epic about the legendary past, Apollonius has done something interestingly innovative. He has not changed the hierarchy of poet and inspirational deity, as scholars have claimed, but found a new way of addressing the problematic aspects of revealed knowledge in a subtle envisioning of divine inspiration. A particularly striking feature is the hierarchical structure he expresses by his use of the phrase "may the Muses be the ὑποφήτορες of my song," which implies that the Muses are subordinate to Apollo and that therefore their information is not direct, with all problems this entails. This hierarchical representation seems triggered by the contingencies of an age in which most readers would have been aware that, in reality, poets obtained a large part of their information about the past from the accounts of predecessors (who, in turn, doubtless had their own sources) stored in the shrine of the Muses, the *Mouseion*. In Apollonius' work, the Muses may be read as personified references to the different ways in which an epic poet with scholarly inclinations establishes, negotiates, chooses, and incorporates truth, tradition, and invention in his narrative. Their first invocation (1.20–22) questions the concept of revealed knowledge by implicitly asking how they obtain their information. The passage thus points to the interpretational difficulties adhering to the establishment of cause and effect, the decision about which version of legend or history is true, and who is ultimately responsible for it.

By connecting prophecy and poetry in this way, Apollonius also, on another level, links two disciplines that had long before his times become separate. This process is reminiscent of the insertion of a hymnic opening and ending in his epic, as analyzed in Chapter 3. In both instances, Apollonius is innovating and creates something new by returning to the fundamental archaic functions of Greek poetry (hymning the gods) and of poets (prophets revealing the truth about the past and about the divine purposes that structure the world and history). Meanwhile, he is able to turn this into a subtle trope of the way in which a learned poet in an age of scholarship deals with the traditional concept of inspiration coming from the Muse.

Theocritus' use of the *hapax* is altogether different.[104] He uses the Homeric word in pindarically influenced contexts of praise in order to emphasize the significance of his status as κλέος-providing singer for rulers with heroic or semi-divine aspirations. He thus stresses the importance and exclusivity of revealed knowledge about the present and future. Only the poet in possession of such knowledge is able to provide humans but also immortal beings with glamor and status. Poetic κλέος is the best gift for men; hymns are the best gifts for the gods; hence both categories need a Muse-inspired prophet to compose for them.

Styling himself thus as a ὑποφήτης Μουσάων, Theocritus not only points backwards to the great poets of the epinician tradition, most notably Pindar, but may also be said to foreshadow the Augustan poets:

> When the Romans for the first time were becoming aware of Greek literature, and ... were turning to the Greeks for their literary types and their metre, it is fair to conjecture that they simply borrowed the term *poietes* because they felt it carried greater prestige and dignity than their own word *vates*, in that it connoted a greater degree of skill and polish. It was not until later that the term *vates* flowered anew and was endowed with deeper brilliance by the Augustan poets who revived the word deliberately, conscious of its more ancient religious connotation, and by so doing renewed the ancient alliance between poetry and prophecy. (Sperduti, 1950: 221)

It seems Hellenistic poets too looked to the prophetic connotations of poetry to infuse their works with a deeper brilliance. And so, although both poets arguably took the same subtext as their basis for their new conceptions of the process of poetic inspiration, the ideas of Apollonius emerge as directly opposite to those of Theocritus. Whereas Theocritus emphasizes his closeness to the Muses and their omniscience and his similarity to such great prophets of the Muses of the lyric, hymnic, and epic tradition as Pindar, Homer, and Hesiod, Apollonius distances himself from the easy acceptance of the belief in revealed knowledge and uses the concept to illustrate the novel difficulties facing a contemporary poet working in a poetic tradition so full of opposing poetic, historical, mythical, and philosophical traditions.

[104] It could be asked who was the first to use the *hapax*; however, questions of priority in Hellenistic poetry are notoriously difficult to answer, cf. Köhnken (2001: 73–92).

CONCLUSION

My argument throughout this study has been that it is necessary to consider two interrelated factors to understand the way Hellenistic poets represented poets and poetry: their position in Greek (literary) history and their socio-cultural surroundings. To understand the Hellenistic preoccupation with the literary past, it is helpful to refer to Assmann's concept of cultural memory. If ever there was a time in Greek antiquity in which this cultural memory was deliberately formed, it must have been Hellenism, the period that saw the introduction of great royal libraries as symbols of Hellenic culture. These were the sites of the beginnings of systematic philology and eventually the formation of canons of literary masterpieces and they instigated the debate about how these masterpieces should be interpreted and why. Storing and studying literature in this way implies a feeling of both of admiration for it and distance from it.

So Hellenistic poets did not regard older Greek poetry in the same way as contemporary poetry, which, for as far as we can tell, formed indeed no part of the libraries' collections. Yet, they clearly sought continuity with the literary past: they admired and mined it for their own poetry to a greater extent than earlier poets had done. Their poetry also differed more from the tradition than that of their predecessors. They sought to authorize these new aspects of their poetry by their constant reference to tradition, real or partly invented. Perhaps their position is best summed up by saying that most of them were conscious of their position as critical and creative readers reflecting on tradition without feeling completely cut off from it. The past must have seemed to them like a "window and mirror:" they sought to recognize their reflection, even if they were separated from the world behind the looking glass.

What part did their social surroundings play in the molding of this attitude towards the past? Many Hellenistic poets worked at or for royal courts that competed in splendor and prestige. The most renowned was that of the Ptolemies at Alexandria, which promoted both study and production of Greek literature on a grand scale to establish a claim on the cultural and political legacy of Alexander the Great. Poets of the age were stimulated to look at and, to some extent, imitate the poetry of the past to enhance the king's prestige. Against this background, which

must have represented a powerful influence even beyond the walls of the Alexandrian Museum and Library, the poets' preoccupation with their response to the literary past becomes clear, as is duly recognized in scholarship.

What has not received a similar amount of scholarly attention is that encouragement by the court also was an important influence on interaction between contemporary poets affiliated to these royal institutions. Their material dependence would have led to rivalry for the king's favor and thereby fueled a strong drive to claim a position of distinction with regard to one's colleagues. Thus the courtly surrounding influenced the Hellenistic poets' identity in two ways: it directed their glance towards the past encouraging them to ground their new poetry in hallowed tradition, and it made them consider their position among contemporary colleagues competing for the favor of the monarch.

Addressing the preoccupation with the past, the first part of this study focused on two categories of predecessors, legendary poets and historical ones. Hellenistic poets attributed a different status to figures such as Orpheus and the mythical herdsman-poet Daphnis than to their historical counterparts Homer, Archilochus, and Pindar. This is mainly due to the fact that the legendary poets had left behind no indisputable literary legacy. To the Hellenistic Greeks, Orpheus was an ambiguous figure, part mythical hero, part mystic teacher, and part cultural forerunner of the Greek poets. The cowherd Daphnis' legacy was, even in antiquity, still vaguer.

However, their doubtful status as authors did not prevent mythical characters from being made into forebears for poetic practice. The fact that they had not left behind a clear-cut literary legacy was welcome: it gave Hellenistic poets the freedom to turn them into their own predecessors by forming them after their own image. This can be observed in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius, where Orpheus is made into a fictional foreshadowing of the narrator's persona, and his songs as a foreshadowing of the *Argonautica*. Theocritus employs the characters Daphnis and Comatas in a similar way to provide his new poetic invention, bucolic poetry, with a venerable and credible ancestry. The intricate design of his bucolic *Idylls* give his readers the feeling that they are witnessing tales set in a fully rounded bucolic world full of traditions; they can perceive the gist while remaining unaware of the full story.

So one way these poets used the work of poets of the past was to mold them as desired in whatever way best reflected their own characteristics. However, this was not so easy when the poets concerned

were clearly circumscribed by a literary legacy that survived to be studied. Historical poets had expressed their own tenets in poetry: this prevented their being cast in entirely new roles. Yet, like legendary poets, they too were used as models whose authority might be invoked in matters of innovative poetic practice. Notably, their authenticating presence seems to have been a matter of dispute between contemporaries: who could lay the most authoritative claim to the most authoritative model?

Hellenistic treatment of historical predecessors took on two forms. They were evaluated, mostly in the literary epitaphs and other forms of epigram that flourished in this era. Interesting aspects of the characterization of historical poets in epigram are the reflection of character and biography in poetic works, and the survival of the poetic legacy through the medium of written texts. The topics are interrelated. Whereas earlier Greek poetry rarely stressed the fact that poetry (or song) could be written down, it becomes the default expectation in the Hellenistic era, the "age of the Book," in Rudolf Pfeiffer's words. That the works of predecessors were securely preserved on scrolls is therefore the reason Hellenistic poets were able to judge them. Poetic works served as the inalienable monument to former poets' existences. The difference between an indisputable literary legacy (such as that of Sophocles) and a legendary, ambiguous one (such as that of Orpheus) was felt, as can be shown from comparison of epitaphs written on these respective poets. This fact, that the foremost testimony that remained of a poet after his death was his work, made characterization on the basis of his works very attractive. This also proves important in the analysis of Hellenistic poets' self-representation. Their insight in the way predecessors were perceived influenced the way in which they chose to present themselves to future generations of readers.

There are some examples of predecessors as models or authorities in other poetic texts. While Hellenistic poets invoked their authority because they felt inspired by Greek poetic tradition, they were unable fully to continue its practices. Not only their mode of composing (with constant intertextual reference to the great tradition) but also the function of their poetry in society (more than ever before, it was defined by reading rather than singing and became an increasingly private art) differed from that of their predecessors. There were various ways of invoking the authority of predecessors and hence justifying novel poetic practices. Predecessors could be cast as models, *protoi heuretai* and inspirers; in such cases it was either opportune to highlight certain traditionally

acknowledged characteristics of their poetry or to manipulate data about their life and works so as to make them fit the proposed aim.

Merely naming poets as models or examples differs from allowing them to speak for themselves in poetry, as the difference between Theocritus 16 and the poems of Timon (*Silloi*), Callimachus (*Iambus* 1), and Herondas (*Mimiambus* 8) illustrates. These latter examples all incorporate poetic authorities as speaking characters. Interestingly, this results in tensions between the message that is being propounded and the medium through which it is expressed. In Timon of Phlius' *Silloi*, the choice to introduce the detractor of Homeric theology Xenophanes as the author's guide through Hades to lead him to his philosophical master, the sceptic Pyrrho, clashes strangely with the Homeric setting and vocabulary. This illustrates the awkwardness of appropriating a predecessor as an authority for a poet's own assertions. By choosing to formulate his narrative as an ironic fantasy, the poet alerts the reader to his awareness of this.

The second part focused on the poets' portrayal of contemporaries, mainly from the point of view of the social interaction of the Museum and Library and comparable institutions at other royal courts. It would be wrong to view any kind of poetry, even Hellenistic poetry, which has traditionally often been considered "*l'art pour l'art*," as a purely aesthetic category. Bourdieu's recognition of the workings of the striving for "distinction" provide a starting point for analyzing the much debated quarrel between Callimachus and Apollonius, as well as the *Aetia*-prologue of Callimachus and the related question of the identity of the *Telchines*. The assumption that Callimachus and Apollonius quarreled is probably due to the observation by later readers that they were both active at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus and produced poetry that could be called similar in stylistic aims. For an observer at some temporal distance, this in itself could suggest that a quarrel between the two was likely; Callimachus' polemical persona presumably did the rest.

Analysis of the *Aetia*-prologue shows that Callimachus' main aim was the creation of a position of distinction and exclusivity for himself, regardless of whether the Telchines were a historical reality. By claiming that he is envied and misunderstood, he implies he is an exceptional and successful poet, who, however, only manages to please true connoisseurs. So a text that has traditionally been interpreted as a purely aesthetically motivated harangue reveals itself as the statement of a strategic position. The discussion of some epigrams attacking contemporaries confirms that what poses as aesthetic judgement may often conceal very different and personal opinions.

The reverse of negative aesthetic judgments, praise, is a neglected subject in Hellenistic poetry. Praise for contemporaries aims to make an assertion about the poetics of the praising voice itself. It may thus serve as a means of obtaining distinction: with their praise of certain elitist and esoteric characteristics of Aratus' *Phaenomena*, Callimachus and Leonidas showed that they belonged to the same category of refined (and esteemed) poets as Aratus. Claiming immortality for a contemporary in a poem implies the expectation that the praise itself will also be immortal. Theocritus' *Idyll* 7 subtly parodies these principles by making Simichidas claim allegiance to Asclepiades and Philitas. Despite his simulated humility, this characterization reveals how the young poet sees himself. Eliciting praise from an addressee or patron works on a comparable principle: by praising the recipient's literary sensibilities, the poet obliges him to like the poem addressed to him, as happens in Theocritus' *Idylls* 16, 17; it is mocked in *Idyll* 11.

It is important to recognize, then, that representation of other poets generally reflects the poet who represents them, whether by inventing or manipulating the past to serve as a poetic mirror, underscoring differences with contemporaries to create a distinct position, or claiming allegiance to (successful or exclusive) contemporaries in order to draw attention to a poet's own artistic tenets. All these appraisals and representations of other poets contain implicit self-portraits.

This brings us to explicit self-portrayals. Hellenistic *sphragides* are the natural counterparts of the biographically influenced literary epitaphs of predecessors. This process of facilitating author identification can also be deliberately reversed, forcing readers to work out who the speaker is on the basis of hints, as in the mimetic *Hymns* of Callimachus. Both of these practices are ultimately grounded in the fact that Hellenistic poetry was poetry by reader-poets for a reading audience. Encountering ancient texts out of their original contexts made the Hellenistic scholars acutely aware of the problems that arise when one visually reads a text that had originally been produced for oral presentation: contingent references, ambiguous speaker changes and the like made interpretation of such texts a challenging and sometimes daunting task.

As the discussion of the epigrams in praise of Aratus' *Phaenomena* showed, *sphragis*-passages could also contain etymological explanations or puns on the name of the author (Ἄρατος/ἀρρητός). Thus Apollonius stresses his connection with the god of poetic inspiration and oracles Apollo in the opening of the *Argonautica*, while Callimachus underscores his poetic ability to find the right word at the right time in his

epigrammatic self-epitaph by implying a *kat'antiphrasin* explanation of the name Battiades ("son of the stammerer").

Theocritus poses a more complicated enigma to his readers when he calls the young poet who is the narrator of his meta-poetic seventh *Idyll* "Simichidas." Scholarship is divided about the degree to which Simichidas should be interpreted as an alter ego of the poet. This question is complicated by the problem of the identification of Simichidas' dialogue partner in the poem, Lycidas. Simichidas has a stronger claim to identification with the author than Lycidas because he is the internal narrator of the poem. On the basis of the meta-poetic interpretation of two intriguing expressions (ἐσθλὸν σὺν Μοίσαισι Κυδωνικὸν εὕρομες ἄνδρα, 7.13; πᾶν ἐπ' ἀλαθείᾳ πεπλασμένον ἐκ Διὸς ἔρνος, 7.44) as well as a structural analysis of the *Idyll*, I argued that both Simichidas and Lycidas are represented on a meta-poetic level as mutual fictions of each other. This means that the poem as a whole presents a reflection upon the role of fictional herdsmen-poets in Theocritus' bucolic poetry. It is an implicit recognition of the fact that he is the originator of the genre and has invented its characters as well as its forebears: bucolic poetry originates in itself.

The final problem I addressed is that of the representation of poetic authority, in particular the status of the Muse as a guarantor of revealed knowledge. By focusing on the use of the Homeric *hapax legomenon* ὑποφήτης (*Il.* 16.235) and its variant ὑποφήτωρ, I analyzed the concept of divine inspiration in Apollonius and Theocritus. The passages in Hellenistic poetry in which these words appear are linked by a specific emphasis on the role of the poet as a recipient and passer on of revealed knowledge. For Theocritus, this role is of particular importance in his problematic position of court-poet glorifying (divine) rulers or their favorite semi-deities. By calling himself a ὑποφήτης, he arrogates a particular panegyric authority to himself. Apollonius, on the other hand, emphasizes the problems inherent to revealed knowledge about the past. By casting the Muses as a link in a hierarchical chain, dependent on the ambiguous oracular wisdom of Apollo, he figuratively addresses the problems of a poet working in the Museum, searching for information in contradictory, obscure, or untrustworthy sources about the past. In last instance, the analysis shows that both poets look back to the earliest origins of poetry for their self-fashioning, combining poetry and prophecy.

In conclusion, Hellenistic poets represent other poets to reflect on their interpretation of these poets as well as on their own poetic tenets. They are simultaneously readers and writers; both aspects form part

of their identity as poets; they see themselves as innovative reflectors on the tradition. Their explicit self-representations appear to target a prospective readership of erudite interpreters who will study this poetry and perhaps even look for their own reflection in it. And yet, their strategic positioning reveals that they are energetic actors in their own Field of Cultural Production as well. Thus their works become what they had made the works of their predecessors and colleagues: both window and mirror.

APPENDIX

LIST OF HELLENISTIC EPIGRAMS ON POETS

Corpus

The corpus consists of early Hellenistic epigrams dealing with poets, i.e. epigrams produced in the third Century BCE. I have chosen to exclude later Hellenistic authors such as Antipater Sidonius and Thessalonicensis as well as Meleager, because they produced their poetry in a different setting. Problematic are the epigrams attributed to Plato on Aristophanes (14 Diehl), Sappho (*AP* 9.506) and Pindar (*AP* 7.35). I follow Gow and Page (1965) in excluding the first two from the Hellenistic age, and attributing the last to Leonidas (20).

Poets of the Past

(Poems marked with an asterisk are discussed in the text.)

Orpheus
AP 7.9 Damagetus*
AP 7.10 Anonymous

Arion
AB 37 Posidippus*

Homer
AP 7.2 Anonymous
AP 9.24 Leonidas
AP 7.1 Alcaeus of Messene
AP 7.5 Alcaeus of Messene
AP 7.80 Callimachus (Homer and Creophylus)

Hesiod
AP 7.55 Alcaeus of Messene
AP 7.54 Mnasalces

Pisander
AP 9.598 Theocritus

Antimachus
AP 9.63 Asclepiades*

Mimnermus, Antimachus, Hesiod, Homer
AP 12.168 Posidippus

On the nine lyric poets
AP 9.184 Anonymous
AP 9.571 Anonymous

Archilochus
AP 9.185 Anonymous
AP 7.664 Theocritus*
AP 7.351 Dioscorides*

Hipponax
AP 7.408 Leonidas*
AP 7.536 Alcaeus of Messene
AP 13.3 Theocritus*

Alcman
AP 7.709 Alexander Aetolus

Sappho
AP 9.189 Anonymous
Ath. 13.696 Posidippus*
AP 7.407 Dioscorides

Pindar
AP 7.35 Leonidas

Anacreon
AP 7.28 Anonymous
AP 7.24 Pseudo-Simonides
AP 7.25 Pseudo-Simonides
AP 7.31 Dioscorides
APl. 306 Leonidas*
APl. 307 Leonidas*
AP 9.599 Theocritus*

Erinna
AP 9.190 Anonymous
AP 7.12 Anonymous*
AP 7.11 Asclepiades
AP 7.13 Leonidas

Philitas
AB 63 Posidippus

Thespis
AP 7.410 Dioscorides*

Aeschylus
AP 7.411 Dioscorides*

Sophocles
AP 7.37 Dioscorides*
AP 7.21 Simmias*
AP 7.22 Simmias

Euripides
AP 7.46 Anonymous

Tellen
AP 7.719 Leonidas

Epicharmus
AP 9.600 Theocritus
AP 7.125 Anonymous

Cratinus
AP 13.29 Nicaenetus of Samos

Heracleitus
AP 7.479 Theodoridas of Samos

Poets of the Present (Including Self-epitaphs)

Aratus
AP 9.507 Callimachus*
AP 9.25 Leonidas*
SH 712 = *Vit. Arat.* 1 (King Ptolemy "Physkon")

Asclepiades
AP 12.50 Asclepiades

Callimachus
AP 7.415 Callimachus*
AP 7.525 Callimachus*
AP 9.566 Callimachus*
AP 11.362 Callimachus*
AP 12.43 Callimachus*
AP 11.275 "Apollonius"*

Euphorion
AP 11.218 Crates*
AP 7.406 Theodoridas*

Hedylus
Ath. 11.473a, GP V Hedylus

Heracleitus
AP 7.80 Callimachus*

Leonidas
AP 7.715 Leonidas
AP 6.300 Leonidas
AP 6.302 Leonidas

Machon
AP 7.708 Dioscorides

Mnasalces
AP 13.21 Theodoridas of Samos*

Nossis
AP 5.170 Nossis
AP 7.718 Nossis

Posidippus
SH 705 = AB 118*

Rhinthon
AP 7.414 Nossis*

Sositheus
AP 7.707 Dioscorides*

Theaetetus
(*AP* 9.565) Callimachus*

Singing versus Writing in the Epigrams

A. *Poets of the Past*

In these epigrams, the profession of the poet is expressed with the following words: ποιητής (*AP* 7.2, 7.5 Homer; 7.664 Archilochus); ἀοιδός (*AP* 7.10 Orpheus; 7.1, 7.80 Homer; 7.13 Erinna; 13.29 Cratinus). Apart from these designations, there is a range of words forming a continuum between the two: εὐφώνων Πιερίδων πρόπολος (*AP* 7.35 Pindar); μουσοποιός (*AP* 9.598 Pisander; 13.3 Hipponax); ὑμνητήρ (*AP* 7.709 Alcman); ὑμνοπόλος (*AP* 9.24 Homer; 7.25 Anacreon; 7.13 Erinna); ᾠδοποιός (*AP* 9.599 Anacreon).

The expressions for the process/activity itself and its final product also range between these terms. Singing/reciting is expressed by (compounds of) the verbs: ἀείδω (*AP* 7.664 Archilochus; 9.63 Antimachus; 7.5 Homer); κλάγγω (*AP* 9.571 Pindar); μελίζεσθαι (*APl.* 307 Anacreon); μέλπεσθαι (AP 7.21 Sophocles; *APl.* 306 Anacreon; *AP* 7.19 Alcman); πνείω (*AP* 7.55 Hesiod; 7.24, 7.25 Anacreon; 7.407 Sappho; 9.571 Simonides); or the nouns ἀοιδή (*AP* 7.410 Thespis; Ath. 13.696 Sappho); αὐδά (*AP* 9.571 Alcaeus); μέλη (*AP* 7.25 Anacreon); μολπή (*AP* 7.25 Anacreon); ὕμνος (*AP* 9.189 Sappho); στόμα (*AP* 7.411 Aeschylus; 9.571 Simonides; 9.184 Pindar); φθέγγω (Ath. 13.696 Sappho; *AP* 9.571 Bacchylides); φθόγγος (*AP* 9.571 Simonides).

References to the lyre and hence to singing can be found in (*APl.* 306, 307, *AP* 7.24, 7.25 Anacreon; 9.189 Sappho; 7.664 Archilochus; 7.10 Orpheus; AB 37 Arion).

It is further noteworthy that Sappho's poems are called her "daughters" (*AP* 7.407); Erinna too is pictured as "giving birth" to her poetry (*AP* 7.12). Cratinus (*AP* 13.29) also uses the verb τέκω to describe the production of poetry.

Writing and its products are expressed by: γράμμα (*AP* 7.80 Homer; 9.63 Antimachus; 9.184 Anacreon; 7.411 Aeschylus); σέλις (*AP* 9.184 Simonides; Ath. 13.696 Sappho; *AP* 7.21 Sophocles); συγγράφω (*AP* 9.598 Pisander).

This leaves verbs and nouns that could both denote writing or the spoken word:

ἔπη (*AP* 7.12 Erinna; 7.2, 7.5 Homer; referring to hexametric poetry); διδασκαλία (*AP* 7.37 Sophocles); κυδαίνω (*AP* 7.1 Homer); ῥήματα (*AP* 9.600 Epicharmus; *AP* 7.408 Hipponax).

There is also a number of references to (specific) meters or genres (iambi, elegiac distich, melic and epic meter, *stichoi*, comedy etc.) and to the "300 verses of Erinna, which conquer Homer's poetry" (*AP* 9.190). In general, lyric poets tend to be associated with song, epic poets and dramatists with writing and singing/reciting.

B. *Poets of the Present*

In these epigrams a similar alternation between ποιέω, ἀείδω, γράφω and more opaque metaphors for the poetic process is found: ποιέω (*AP* 11.218; *AP* 7.406, Euphorion); ποίημα (*AP* 12.43, Callimachus *AP* 11.218 Euphorion); ποιητής (*AP* 9.566 Callimachus).

Singing/reciting is expressed by the following words and metaphors: ἀείδω and compound verbs (AB 118 Posidippus; *AP* 7.525 Callimachus); ἀήδονις (*AP* 7.414 Rhinthon);

ἀήδων (*AP* 7.80 Heraclitus, referring to his works; AB 118 Archilochus, referring to the man); ἀοιδή/ἄεισμα (*AP* 9.507, Hesiod/Aratus *AP* 7.415, Callimachus); ἀοιδός (*AP* 9.507 Hesiod);

κύκνος (*AP* 5.135 Zeno); τέττιξ (*AP* 12.98 Posidippus).

The following expressions seem to indicate improvisation: καίρια συγγελάσαι *AP* 7.415 (apparently used in opposition to ἀοιδή); παίζω (Ath 11.473a GPV Hedylus).

Writing is expressed by the words βίβλος (AB 118 Posidippus); γράμμα (*AP* 9.20 Aratus, note that in AP9.507 the same work is referred to by ἄεισμα); γράφω (*AP* 11.275 Callimachus; AB 118 Posidippus); δέλτον/σέλις (AB 118 Posidippus); ἐν βύβλοις πεπονημένη … ψύχη (*AP* 12.98 Posidippus); κωμῳδογράφος (*AP* 7.708 Machon).

This leaves words that would seem to indicate speaking rather than writing: ἔπος (*AP* 9.507 Aratus/Hesiod Ath. 11.473a GPV Hedylus); ὀρθοεπής (AB 118 Posidippus); ῥήσιες (*AP* 9.507 Aratus).

In some epigrams metaphors for poetry are used that leave unexpressed whether written words are imagined or songs; the humble gifts Leonidas offers to the goddess Lathria in *AP* 6.300 are usually understood metapoetically; since they suggest material objects, written poems might be intended. A similar claim could be made about *AP* 6.302, where Leonidas refers to his household stores, which mice try to raid. The "roses" of Nossis (*AP* 5.170) are more ambiguous, as is her expression for receiving inspiration in *AP* 7.718 (τᾶν Σαπφοῦς χαρίτων ἄνθος ἐναυσόμενος). A similar metaphor is found in *AP* 7.708 (Dioscorides on Machon) ἐν Μούσαις δριμὺ πέφυκε θύμον, referring to the wit of Attic comedy, transferred by Machon from Attica to Alexandria.

Sometimes (expressions containing) Μοῦσα indicate either the poetic talent/inspiration of a given author (*AP* 5.135 Cleanthes), or his works (*AP* 7.715 Leonidas), or a genre (*AP* 7.707 Sositheus).

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INDEX LOCORUM

AELIANUS
Varia historia 10.18 89–90

ALCAEUS OF MESSENE
AP 7.1 247, 250, 251
AP 7.5 247, 250, 251
AP 7.55 247
AP 7.536 248

ALCMAN
fr. 1. *PMG* 50–57 186–187

ALEXANDER AETOLUS
AP 7.709 248, 250

ANTHOLOGIA PALATINA
7.2 247, 250, 251
7.10 247, 250
7.12 248, 250, 251
7.28 248
7.42 6–9
7.46 249
7.125 249
9.184 248, 250
9.185 248
9.189 248, 250
9.190 68–69, 248, 251
9.571 248, 250

VITA APOLLONII RHODII
β, 4–9 122

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS
1.1–2 190–191, 220
1.1–4 87–88, 213
1.5–8 223
1.18–22 217–225
1.23–27 75–77
1.494–451 83
1.540 83–85
1. 569–572 83–85
1.1310–1320 216–217, 223
2.702–713 88–90
2.161–162 83–85, 90
2.685–693 83–84
4.902–909 82–85
4.1158–1160 83–85
4.1193–1196 83–85
4. 1773–1781 88, 90

PSEUDO-APOLLONIUS
AP 11.275 123–124, 249

ARATUS
Phaenomena
1–6 225–226
2 156–159, 188, 190–191
15–18 226
163–164 215–216
783–787 156–159

ASCLEPIADES
AP 7.11 248
AP 9.63 70–71, 135–137, 247, 250
AP 12.50 249

BACCHYLIDES
Paean. fr. 5 Maehler 40

CALLIMACHUS
Aet. fr. 1. Pf. 1–44 127–135
Aet. fr.1 Pf. 21–28 66
Aet. .fr. 1 Pf.. 25–28 163
Aet. fr.1 Pf. 29–30 169

CALLIMACHUS (*continued*)
Aet. fr. 3–4 Mass. (Somnium) 6–9, 149
Aet. fr. 64 Pf. 30–35
Aet.. fr. 75 Pf.32 137
Aet. Fr. 75 Pf.76–77 210–211
fr. 398 Pf. 71, 136
AP 7.415 192–194, 249, 251
AP 7.80 161–162, 247, 249, 250, 251
AP 7.525 191–192, 249, 251
AP 9.507 12, 149, 157–161, 249, 251
AP 9.565 163–166, 250
AP 9.566 164–166, 249, 251
AP 11.362 165–166, 249
AP 12.43 249, 251
Hymn to Apollo 1–5 187
Hymn to Apollo 102–113 10, 63–65, 140
Iamb. 1 (fr. 191 Pf.) 50–51, 117, 140, 242
Iamb. 2 (fr. 192 Pf.) 138, 140
Iamb. 4 (fr.194) 139–140
Iamb. 13 (fr. 203 Pf.) 46, 49–50, 117

Diegeseis in Iambos Callimachi
Fr. 1.195 Pf. 122–123
Fr. 192.22–31 Pf. 138
Fr. 194 Pf. 139

CICERO
Brutus 71 77–78

CRATES OF MALLES
AP 11.218 142–143, 145, 188, 249, 251

CRITIAS
Test. 88 B 44 DK 181

DAMAGETUS
AP 7.9 26–27, 247

DIODORUS SICULUS
4.84.3–5 88–89

DIOGENES LAERTIUS
1.28–29 32–33

DIOSCORIDES
AP 7.37 151–153, 248, 251
AP 7.351 36, 248
AP 7.407 248, 250
AP 7.707 151–153, 250, 251
AP 7.708 151–154, 251
AP 7.410 151, 248, 250
AP 7.411 151, 248, 250
AP 7.708 249

HEDYLUS
Ath. 11.473a (GP V) 249, 251

HERMESIANAX
Leontion (fr. 7 Powell) 61–63

HERONDAS
Mimiamb. 8 50–53, 116

HERODOTUS
4.155 194

HESIOD
Theogonia
22–23 6–9
81–98 231
Opera et dies
1–4 158–159
10–25 117–118

HOMER
Iliad
2.485–486 209
3.236–244 234
16.235 213–214, 222, 244
16.233–238 214–215
16. 249–250 214–215
*D-Schol. In Il.*16.235
215

LEONIDAS
AP 6.300 249, 251
AP 6.302 249, 251
AP 7.13 248, 250
AP 7.31 248
AP 7.35 248, 250
AP 7.408 248, 251
AP 7.715 249, 251
AP 7.719 249
AP 9.24 247, 250
AP 9.25 159–161, 249
AP 13.21 247
APl. 306 38–39, 248, 250
APl. 307 39, 248, 250

MNASALCES
AP 7.54 247

NICAENETUS OF SAMOS
AP 13.29 249, 250

NICIAS
Fr. 566 *SH* 171–172

NOSSIS
AP 7.414 149–150, 250, 251
AP 5.170 250, 251
AP 7.718 250, 251

PINDAR
I. 2.1–11 54–55
N. 7.20–23 17
*N.*8.18–24 118
*N.*10.82–88 233–234
*O.*1.35–41 103–104
O. 14.3–9 59
*O.*2.87–88 125
P. 2.54–56 17
P. 1.52–55 103
Paean. 52h Snell-Maehler
66
Fr. 31 Snell-Maehler
85–86

POSIDIPPUS
AB 37 15–16, 247, 250
AB 63 248
AB 117 (Ath. 13.696)
148–149, 248
AB 118 177–183, 250, 251
AB 122 28–30, 250
AB 123 (*AP* 5.135)
251
AB 140 (*AP* 12.98)
135–136, 247

SIMIAS
AP 7.21 26, 28, 248, 250
AP 7.22 248

SIMONIDES
AP 2.49 34
PMG 581 33
fr. 4 Bergk 30–31

PSEUDO-SIMONIDES
AP 7.24 248, 250
AP 7.25 248, 250

SUDA
s.v. Καλλίμαχος 15–16
124

TIMON OF PHLIUS
Fr .775 *SH* 47
Fr.783 *SH* 47–49
Fr. 786 *SH* 115–116

THEOCRITUS
AP 7.664 37–38, 248, 250
AP 9.599 40–41, 248
AP 9.598 247, 250
AP 9.600 249, 251
AP 13.3 248, 250

Theocritus (*continued*)
Idylls
1 99–104
5.20 105
5.78–80 105
7 195–207
7.13 203–204, 244
7.27–48 67–68, 166–169
7.44 202–203, 244
7.70–89 205–207
7.72–77 106
7.78–89 107–108
7 96–102 201–202
11 171, 243
13.1–4 111
16 54–60, 169–171, 242
16.22–31 227–229
16.29 213
16.33 231
17.112–120 169–171, 213, 229–232, 243
17.121–123 230
17.135–137 232
18.1–9 185–186
22 233
22.116–119 104–105, 213
22. 211–212 234
22. 213–222 235–236
22. 223 236

Theodoridas of Samos
AP 13.21 141–142, 145, 250
AP 7.406 143–144, 145, 249, 251
AP 7.479 249

Theognis
18–22 176–177

INDEX OF GREEK TERMS

ὑπόνοια 60–63
ὑποφήτωρ 217–225
ὑποφήτης 214–217

κατάβασις 47–49
κατ᾽ ἀντίφρασιν 190–195
κελευστής 83
κλέος 54–60, 227–229

λεπτός 69–72, 127–135, 154–161
λεπτότης 69–72, 127–135, 154–161

παχύς 69–72
πρῶτος εὑρετής 75–81

INDEX RERUM

Achilles 59, 214–215, 235
Acontius 168, 210
acrostics 156, 158, 160
Aeschylus 47, 151, 218, 248, 250
Aemulatio 43
aggression 53, 117
Alcaeus of Lesbos 16, 55
Alcaeus of Messene 247, 248, 250
Alcman 186–187, 248, 250
Alexander Aetolus 248
Alexander the Great 3, 18, 19, 239
Alexandra 226–227
Alexandria 2, 4, 15–21, 33, 49–50, 122, 143, 153, 154, 239, 251
alias 175–208
allegorical readings 61–62
allusive narrative 103–105
alter ego 175–208
Amycus 83, 85
Antimachus of Colophon 70–72, 135–137, 142, 145, 147, 168, 247, 250
Anacreon 37–41, 55, 207, 248, 250
Aphrodite 54, 100–101
Apollo 37, 43, 46, 64–66, 76; 83–91 (in the *Argonautica*); 130–134 (in the *Aetia-prologue*); 137, 140, 163, 176, 180, 187, 190, 191, 194, 215, 220–227, 229, 232, 237, 243, 244
Apollonius of Rhodes 2, 4, 10, 11, 14, 65, 75–91, 113, 121–127, 135, 144, 190–191, 208, 211–229, 237–238, 240, 242–244, 249
appropriation (of literary past) 10, 21, 32, 45–47, 51, 53, 63, 72, 75–113, 116, 242
Aratus of Soloi 12, 154–161, 166, 172, 188, 190–191, 211, 215–216, 225–227, 243, 249, 251
Aratus (friend of Theocritus) 122, 149, 200–202, 206–208
Archaic period 2, 3, 16, 21, 22–23, 26, 154, 237
Archilochus 17, 24, 35–38, 41, 180–183, 207, 240, 248, 250, 251
Archilocheion 37, 180
Arion 15–16, 247, 250
Aristophanes (comic poet) 47, 118, 154, 247
Aristotle 78, 82, 118, 126
Arsinoe 15, 16
Artemis 83, 85, 97, 98
art pour l'art 242
Asclepiades 135–137, 145, 167–168, 188, 207, 243, 247, 248, 249
askoliasmos 51, 116
Assmann, Jan 10, 20–23, 147, 153, 239
Athena 218, 234
Athens 21–23, 29, 154
Augustan Poetry 238
Authority (poetic) 14, 45–47, 52, 71–72, 75, 79–81, 91, 104–105, 109, 133–134, 140, 149, 150, 161, 202, 209–237, 241, 242, 244

Bacchus 27, 39, 81, 163, 178
Bacchic mysteries 27
Bacchylides 43, 72, 125, 250
Battiades 13, 14, 188, 191–193, 244
Battus 188, 193–194
biography 35–41, 82, 125, 127, 181, 241
Bing, Peter 13, 15, 16, 25, 26, 40, 172, 183, 184
book (age of the) 12, 26–35, 71, 177, 179, 241
books (poetry) 105, 138, 152, 165–166
blame 49, 55, 115–144, 148, 172, 173, 188
Bourdieu, Pierre 26, 120–121, 127, 134, 137, 144, 164, 242

bucolic poetry 91–113, 150, 169, 195–208, 240, 244
Bucaeus 111

Callimachus *passim*, especially 6–10, 12, 14, 30–35, 49–54, 63–72, 115–138, 154–161, 162–167, 183–188, 191–195, 210–211
Calliope 27, 75, 76, 79, 210
Cameron, Alan 65, 69, 70, 124, 136, 164
Canon 15, 38, 41, 70, 78, 147, 239
captatio benevolentiae 172, 173
caricature 39, 41–42
Castor 104, 233–234
Cassandra 226–227
Catalogue of Argonauts 76–77, 82
Catalogues (Poetic) 62–62, 75, 82, 124
cicada 130–131, 134, 169
Charites 54–61
Choerilus 142
choral lyric 22, 93, 183–188
Cheiron 76, 82
Comatas 76, 97, 99, 105–112, 195–207, 240
Comedy (Old) (New) 22, 44, 151, 153, 154, 165, 251
communicative memory 23
competition 11, 22, 45, 51, 52, 72, 73, 80, 115–146, 164–167
context (loss of) 183–188
contemporaries (poets) 115–144, 147–172
continuity (with the past) *passim*, especially 15–23, 43–72, 75–81, 149–153, 209–212, 237–138
collections (of epigrams) 24–42
Cos 106, 195
Cosmogony 83, 85, 91
countryside 91–112, 195–199
Court 2, 11, 18–21, 45, 80, 115–121, 128, 143, 144, 167, 239, 240, 242, 244
Cultural Memory 10, 18–24, 35, 41–42, 45, 69–74, 80, 147, 172, 239
Cultural Capital 120–121, 127
Crates of Mallos 142–143, 145, 188, 208, 249
Critias 181
criticism (negative) 49, 68, 115–146, 148, 154, 172
Cydippe 70, 137, 168, 210
Cyclops 94, 96, 109, 112, 171, 200
Cyrene 19, 126, 188, 191–195

Damagetus 26–27, 247
Daphnis 77, 94, 96, 99–112, 200, 204, 205, 206, 240
daughters of Lycambes 36, 41
dedicatory epigrams 15, 24, 25, 37
dead poets 15–42, 43–72
Demeter 130, 185, 199
Dichterweihe 198
Dionysus 8, 39, 47, 52, 81, 164, 170, 230
Dionysiac mysteries 39
Dionysiac festival 163–165, 170, 230
Dioscorides 36, 41, 150–154, 248, 250, 251
Dioscuri 85, 86, 104–105, 233–237
Distinction 121, 129, 134, 137, 144, 164, 172, 240, 242, 243
Dodona 214–215, 217, 220
Doricha 28–29
Doricism 37, 93–95
Drama 3, 52, 149–150–153, 165, 185–186, 251
Dreams 6–9, 51 (of Callimachus); 51–53 (of Herondas)

Egypt 16–19, 29, 116, 126, 130, 153, 229
Ehoiai 62
Elegy 7, 22, 27, 46, 61–63, 70–71, 82, 132, 135, 136–137, 141, 145, 177–183, 251
elite 21, 121, 167, 181, 182
encomium 32, 95, 164, 170, 211, 227–233

enigmas 13, 14, 64, 188, 196, 226, 227, 244
envy 50, 64, 117–118, 131–132, 135, 143–144, 191–192
Epicharmus 37, 249, 251
Epigram *passim*, especially15–42, 141–144, 147–166, 191–193, 247–251
epinicia 55, 86, 90, 93, 125, 238
epitaph 13, 24–42, 45, 143–144, 149–150, 153, 175, 192–193, 207, 241, 243, 244, 249–251
epithalamia 85
epic meter 7, 27, 68–69, 76, 92, 94, 95, 221, 251
epic 11, 76, 64–66, 75, 87–88, 91, 92–95, 123, 125–126, 154, 209–227, 251
Ergänzungsspiel 14, 183–187
Eratosthenes 211
Erinna 68–69, 248, 250, 251
Erinnerungsfiguren 21
Eris 117–121
Eros 61, 100–101, 111
etymology 143, 158, 188–195
ethopoiia 25, 41–42, 45
Eucritus 195
Eudoxus 155, 158, 160, 211, 226
Euergetes (Ptolemy) 19
Euphorion (of Chalcis) 142–144, 145, 188, 249, 251
Euripides 47, 151, 153, 249

Fantuzzi, Marco 5, 7, 45, 46
fame 26–42, 52, 54–60, 70, 150, 159, 163–164, 167, 175–183, 227–237
field of Cultural Production 12, 120–121, 127, 129, 144, 148, 172, 245
fictional alter ego 201, 207
financial support 20, 54–60, 121
flattery 128, 169–173
floating gap (fliessende Lücke) 23, 80, 153–154, 172
friendship 54, 161–166, 169–174

Genre 25, 26, 35, 43–45, 46–47, 52–53, 63, 72, 82–91, 92–99, 112, 149–150, 180, 244, 251
gods (in the *Argonautica*) 81–91, 209–226
Gow. A.S.F. 105, 142, 143, 165, 177, 183, 197, 235, 247
glosses 212–222
graces 54–60, 171
graves 26–35, 36, 41, 191–192, 207
Greece 4, 15–16, 18–19, 80

Hades 47–49, 27, 161, 162, 228, 231, 234, 242
Hapax legomenon 14, 212–222, 244
head-librarian 213
Hedylus 249, 251
Helen 8, 30, 109, 185, 234, 235
Helicon 6–9, 14, 61, 179
Heracles 76, 81, 86, 111, 216–217, 233
herdsmen 91–113, 166, 197–200, 204–208, 240, 244
heritage (cultural, literary) *passim*, especially 4, 15–42, 43–74, 75–112, 149–154, 212
heroic age 79, 111
Herodotus 82, 194
Herondas 49–54, 72, 116, 185, 242
Hermes 98, 100, 101
Hermesianax 60–63, 72, 82
Hesiod 6–9, 12, 61, 78, 82, 117–118, 149, 157, 159, 233, 238, 247, 250, 251
Hexameter 7, 22, 27, 68, 76, 92, 94
historical poets 15–42, 43–74, 221
Hieron II of Syracuse 54–60, 169–172, 227–229
Hipponax 2, 35, 37, 41, 46, 49–54, 72, 116, 140, 248, 250, 251
Homer 10, 13, 24, 57–59, 61, 63–69, 71, 72, 77, 78, 81, 82, 104, 105, 143, 168, 189, 209, 212–214, 229, 234, 235, 236, 238, 240, 247, 250, 251

Homeric imitation 64–69
Homeric scholarship 212–214
Hobsbawm 79–80
Hunter, Richard 5, 22, 45, 46, 202
Hylas 111
Hymns 59–60, 82–91, 183–188, 229–237
Hymnic opening (of the *Argonautica*) 82–91

Iambi (Callimachus) 37, 39, 49–54, 116, 126, 137–141, 180, 192, 251
Iambic tradition 49, 50, 140
Ibis 124–125
Ideology (Ptolemaic) 15–21
Idylls 91–112, 195–207
Iliad 21, 68, 105, 209, 211, 214, 234, 235, 236
Imitatio 1, 43, 46, 63–70, 116, 142, 145, 152
immortality (poetic) 26–35, 41, 161–166, 173, 182, 183, 229–233, 234, 236, 243
inspiration 5, 13, 14, 153, 164, 191, 199, 209–227, 237, 238, 243, 244, 251
insubstantial voices 183–188
interaction (poetic) 115–146, 147–174
intertextuality 4, 5, 93, 94
Invective 39, 44, 53, 124, 137–144
invented tradition 80, 113
Ion of Chios 46, 49, 52

Jason 76, 83, 85

Katabasis 47
kat'antiphrasin 244
katoptron 155
kleos 183
kosmos 86
Kreuzung der Gattungen 3, 44

Leonidas of Tarentum 38, 39, 159, 160, 161, 166, 172, 182, 243, 247, 248, 249, 251
Leontion 60–63, 72, 82
Library (Alexandrian) passim, especially 4, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15–21, 25, 45, 83, 91, 115, 118, 121, 143, 211, 213, 240, 242
Libya 6, 8, 194
Linus 78
Literacy 26
locus amoenus 194–195
love (as theme of bucolic poetry)
Lycidas 67, 99, 106, 108, 109, 111, 112, 166–169, 195–208, 244
Lycophron 226, 227
Lyde 70–71, 135–137, 145, 168
lyre 15, 16, (Arion's) 27, 37, 39, 54, 76, 81, 84, 87, 89, 178, 201, 232, 250
lyric "I" 35–41
lyric poetry 3, 16, 22, 35, 37, 46, 55, 82, 83, 85, 92, 93, 98, 103, 150, 154, 186, 248, 251
lyric meter 22

Macedonia 19, 155, 179, 181, 183
Machon 150, 151, 153, 154, 249, 251
Manipulation 115, 183, 184
mask (iambic) 50, 51, 138, 140, 152, 197
masquerade bucolique 197, 199
Medea 76, 83, 85
memory (cultural) 10, 18–24, 34, 35, 41, 42
metaphor 30, 31, 47, 65, 76–77, 133, 134, 142, 147, 153, 224, 251
meter (recitative; lyric; epic, elegiac)
Midas-epitaph 33, 34
mimetic hymns 190–195
mimiambi 49–54
Mimnermus 46, 130, 132, 189, 247
mise en abyme 96, 112, 204
modesty 50, 67, 167, 182, 191
Mnasalces 141, 142, 145, 247, 250
Mnemosyne 34
Mnesiepes-inscription 37, 180
monument (poetry as) 26–35
Momos see *blame*

Musaeus 78
Muses 34, 37, 43, 46, 51, 52, 54, 57, 59, 60, 67, 68, 70, 73, 77, 86, 88, 91, 99, 102, 105, 107, 108, 115, 116, 117, 121, 130, 131, 134, 145, 148, 149, 150, 152, 153, 154, 158, 167, 170, 171, 172, 173, 178, 179, 190, 203, 205, 209–238, 244
Museum 11, 15, 19, 20, 45, 73, 91, 115, 116, 118, 119
mystic initiation 182, 183
mythical poets 10, 75–113

names 108–110, 142–144, 188–208
narrator (of the *Argonautica*) 82–91, 217–225
Nekyia 47–49
Nicaenetus 249
Nicander 211
Nicias 111, 171–173
Nossis 149–150, 175, 250, 251

Odyssey 21, 58, 61, 68, 109, 189, 225
Odysseus 17, 58, 189, 225
oracles 37–38, 64–65, 82, 87, 179–181, 188, 215, 220–223, 227, 229, 243
orality 23, 33, 41, 177, 184, 209, 243
originality 43–45, 133, 141, 149–150
Orpheus 2, 10, 26–27, 41, 75–91, 112–113, 179, 180, 240, 241, 247, 250
Orphic writings 78, 82

Page, D. 142, 143, 165, 177, 183, 247
paideia 19–20, 35
pastoral see *bucolic*
pastoral analogies 200, 204
Patroclus 214
patronage 18–21, 22, 54–60, 116, 121, 169, 170
Penelope 61, 63
performance 82–84, 89, 90, 118, 176–177, 183–188, 202, 206, 207
Pergamon 143
Persona 2, 9, 51, 77, 87, 90, 113, 116, 127, 139, 144, 165, 175–209
Pfeiffer, Rudolf 4, 12
Pieria 67, 158
Pindar 8, 17, 24, 54–60, 66, 85, 90, 93, 103–105, 118, 125, 127, 129, 132, 184, 186, 209, 229, 233, 238, 240, 247, 248, 250
Pisander 37, 247, 250
Phanocles 82
Philadelphus (Ptolemy) 15, 19, 167, 169, 172, 229–233, 242
Philitas of Cos 19, 46, 67, 106, 132, 142, 167, 168, 207, 243, 248
philology 45, 68, 116, 212–214, 239
philosophy 47–49, 61, 209, 238, 242
Phoebus 87, 88, 89, 178, 190–191, 201, 220
Phthonos see *envy*
Plato 70, 78, 82, 104, 105, 209, 211, 247
Polemics 66, 75, 115–144, 242
Polyeideia 46
Polydeuces 32, 83, 85–86, 90, 104, 233–234
Polyphemus 96, 108, 109, 111, 112, 171, 216
Posidippus 13, 15, 28–29, 70, 135–136, 145, 148, 149, 153, 177–183, 207, 247, 248, 250, 251
Priapus 100–102
praise 2, 12, 17, 37, 57–58, 70–71, 85–86, 88, 91, 135, 137, 147–172, 191, 202, 209, 211, 227, 238, 243
Praxiphanes 135–136
predecessors 15–42; 43–74 (historical); 75–114 (mythical)
prophets 32, 87, 170, 212–238
prose 46, 155, 210–211, 226
pseudepigraphy 45, 75–82

pseudonym 188–209
pun 143–144, 188–194
Pyrrho 47–49
Pythia 194, 215, 221

quarrel (Callimachus-Apollonius) 10–11, 51, 121–127, 135, 140, 144–145, 242

revenant 50
riddles 192
Rhinton of Syracuse 149–150, 250, 251

Sappho 16, 28–29, 68–69, 150, 247, 248, 250
skepticism 47–49
Scholia Florentina 127, 128, 135–136, 182
self-representation *passim*, especially 12, 13, 87, 127–135, 175–208, 229, 241, 245
Sicelidas 135, 167, 188
Sicily 59, 93, 94, 97, 99, 106, 112, 170
Silloi 47–48, 242
Simichidas 13, 14, 67, 95–96, 106, 108, 109, 166–169, 173, 188, 195–208, 243–244
Sim(m)ias 26, 27, 196
Simonides 30–34, 41, 55–58, 88, 93, 118, 125, 141, 145, 248, 250
Sirens 82, 83, 84
Sphragis 13, 175–208, 243
Sobriquet 175–208
Sophocles 26–28, 151–154, 241, 248, 250, 251
Sositheus 150–154, 250, 251
Soter (Ptolemy) 4, 19, 78, 128, 231, 233
Strife 115–146
Syracuse 54, 60, 93, 149

Telchines 46, 127–137, 169, 242
Timon of Phlius 47–49, 116, 242
Tityrus 106, 111, 202, 204–206
Thalysia 195, 199
Thamyris 78
Theaetetus 163–166, 173, 250
Theocritus passim especially 1, 10, 13, 14, 22, 36–42, 54–60, 67–68, 77–79, 91–114, 150, 166, 169–173, 195–208, 227–238
Theodoridas of Samos 141, 143, 144, 145, 249, 250
Theognis 30, 176
Theogony 6, 7, 8, 21, 88, 198, 233
Thespis 151, 248, 250

Vitae 17, 35, 122, 125
Vansina, Jan 23, 153

Xenomedes 210
Xenophanes 47–49

Zeno 251
Zeus 31, 60, 85, 125, 130, 132, 138, 155, 158–160, 167, 168, 170, 190, 203, 214–215, 216–217, 222–223, 225–227, 232–233